ADDRESSES

TO

THE DEITY.

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TO

THE DEITY.

BY

JAMES FORDYCE, D.D.

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

PREFACE.

THE following Addreſſes were written very lately in a ſtate of rural retirement. They are now ſubmitted to the Public, with that deference to which it is always entitled. Though the writer has been compelled, by want of health, to leave off the ordinary labours of his profeſſion, he never thought of relinquiſhing its principles or its ſpirit. They are the chief comfort of his declining days; and while life, with any ſhare of ability, is continued, he would not

be wholly uſeleſs to the higheſt intereſts of mankind.

Having ever regarded a rational and fervent Devotion as the nobleſt exerciſe of the human mind, and the richeſt ſource of improvement and conſolation, he wiſhes to promote its practice by any means left in his power, and hopes that readers of a ſerious, and at the ſame time a liberal turn, may not wholly diſreliſh the contents of this little book.

He apprehends that the character of Devotion has frequently

ſuffered

ſuffered from the forbidding air which has been thrown over it, by the narrowneſs of bigotry on one hand, or the gloom of ſuperſtition on the other. When freer and more chearful minds have not had occaſion to ſee it accompanied with thoſe feelings of delight and benevolence which naturally attend it, they are apt to be prejudiced againſt piety at large, by miſtaking this ungracious appearance for its genuine form. Nor has the rant of vulgar enthuſiaſts contributed a little to beget or ſtrengthen the ſame averſion, in perſons of a cool and ſpeculative temper; who have happened

pened to meet with ſuch images and phraſes among religioniſts of a certain ſtrain, as ill ſuit the rational, pure, and ſpiritual nature of true Devotion. It may likewiſe be remarked on the other ſide, that people of taſte and ſenſibility have not ſeldom been diſguſted with the inſipid ſtyle too often employed on ſuch ſubjects, by thoſe who poſſeſs neither, or who purpoſely avoid every thing of that kind, from an aim at ſimplicity miſunderſtood, or perhaps from a fear of being thought too warm, in an age of faſhionable indifference and falſe refinement.

Wherever

Wherever the vital and unadulterated ſpirit of Chriſtian Devotion prevails, its immediate object will be to pleaſe Him whom we were made to pleaſe, by adoring his perfections; by admiring his works and ways; by entertaining with reverence and complacence the various intimations of his pleaſure, eſpecially thoſe contained in Holy Writ; by acknowledging our abſolute dependence, and infinite obligations; by confeſſing and lamenting the diſorders of our nature, and the tranſgreſſions of our lives; by imploring his grace and mercy through Jeſus Chriſt; by interceding

ceding for our brethren of mankind; by praying for the propagation and eſtabliſhment of truth, righteouſneſs, and peace on earth; in fine, by longing for a more entire conformity to the will of God, and breathing after the everlaſting enjoyment of his friendſhip. The effects of ſuch a ſpirit habitually cheriſhed, and feelingly expreſſed before him, with conceptions more or leſs enlarged and elevated, in language more or leſs emphatical and accurate, ſententious or diffuſe, muſt ſurely be important and happy. Among theſe effects may be reckoned, a profound humility in the ſight

of

of God, a high veneration for his preſence and attributes, an ardent zeal for his worſhip and honour, an affectionate faith in the Saviour of the world, a conſtant imitation of his divine example, a diffuſive charity for men of all denominations, a generous and unwearied ſelf-denial for the ſake of virtue and ſociety, a total reſignation to Providence, an increaſing eſteem for the Goſpel, with clearer and firmer hopes of that immortal life which it has brought to light. To promote theſe diſpoſitions and this ſtate of mind in himſelf and others, was the deſign of the writer in

theſe few Addreſſes, ſo far as they extend; which is indeed but a very little way in the wide field of devotional exerciſe; his health not having allowed him to proceed farther at preſent.

He can hardly expect, that what is here offered will be approved by ſuch as require ſcholaſtic method or exact order, even in things of this nature. That in thoſe effuſions of the heart which are to meet the public eye, there ſhould be ſome kind of connexion, he readily allows; and particularly he thinks, that the names and characters

aſcribed

aſcribed to the Divinity in the courſe of them, ſhould often have a diſtinct and manifeſt reference to the different ſentiments or ideas, on account of which they are introduced: a circumſtance perhaps not ſufficiently regarded, in many valuable ſamples of written devotion. He thinks likewiſe, that the tranſitions from one article or topic to another ſhould appear neither forced, nor very abrupt; as a tone of recollection and compoſure, by no means inconſiſtent with pathos or fervour, ought to reign through the whole. But he believes, that a regular arrangement of the ſeveral

parts of Prayer, called Adoration, Thankſgiving, Confeſſion, Petition, and Interceſſion, is not indiſpenſably neceſſary to this duty, even in its ſtricteſt form. On the contrary he ſuſpects, that a minute and laborious attention to ſuch regularity might rather be hurtful, by interrupting the ſtream of devout affection, and hurrying the mind through too great a variety of matter, to leave it under the full impreſſion of thoſe conſiderations, which ſhould more eſpecially engage it at the time, according to the occaſion or leading ſubject in queſtion.

The firſt Addreſs turns on a View of the Sea from a Temple at High Cliff, near Chriſt-Church, Hampſhire. The ſecond has for its ſubject, Salvation by Chriſt, and was intended as a ſequel to the former. The third, on Contemplation, grew out of both. The fourth and fifth, on Providence, will not perhaps be deemed either a diſagreeable or an improper addition. The ſixth was occaſioned by the Death of the late Dr. Samuel Johnſon, with whom the author had for many years the ſatisfaction of being intimately acquainted, and by whom he was favoured

favoured with the fulleſt confidence on the moſt intereſting points.

He choſe the title of *Addreſſes to the Deity*, rather than that of *Prayers*, becauſe, though they contain many Petitions and Interceſſions, they partake chiefly of the ſtyle of Meditation. In truth, they are meant for a ſpecies of Pious Contemplations, where the Soul, acting under an animated ſenſe of the Divine Preſence, expreſſes with humility and ardour her inmoſt thoughts, affections, and deſires, on different ſubjects,

and

and ſtill looks up to God as her Parent and her Judge, whoſe approbation conſtitutes her ſovereign felicity, as He alone can protect and bleſs her through every period of her exiſtence.

In this view it is hoped, that candour will make allowance for the freedom of introducing from Life, as well as from Scripture, various characters and events, which roſe to the memory, and excited the ſenſibility of the writer. Thoſe, indeed, he did not always find it very eaſy to repreſent in language immediately directed to

the Supreme. But he was deſirous of making the attempt, from a belief that generalities ſeldom touch the heart, and that particular circumſtances and objects are more likely to awaken and affect it.

The Breaks between the paragraphs, marked by Numbers, were deſigned for reſting-places to the reader, in caſe he ſhould be inclined to adopt any part of theſe Addreſſes for his own uſe; as he may there ſtop for a longer or ſhorter time, to think over what he has juſt read, for the purpoſe of

of impreſſing it more deeply, and then renew his attention to proceed, with a ſacred feeling of the ſame tranſcendent Preſence. By ſuch ſolemn pauſes, the author conceives that exerciſes of this kind, eſpecially where they run into ſome length, might be rendered more moving and efficacious, than it is to be feared is often the caſe, from the ſuperficial and haſty manner in which they are too commonly performed.

Be that as it may, he will be thankful to Heaven, if any thing contained in the following ſheets

ſhall

ſhall contribute ſomewhat to aſſiſt the devout, to inſpire the young with the love of Virtue, Knowledge, and Religion, and to improve a taſte for theſe where it is already formed.

* * * * * * * * * * *

The greater part of the above had been written but a few days, when the author was ſeized with a dangerous fever, from which he is now, by God's bleſſing, recovered. On this occaſion, he preſumes, there can be no reaſon why he ſhould conceal, what every ſentiment of pious gratitude prompts him

him to ſpeak out, that during his illneſs he ſaw with new evidence, and felt with unuſual force, the neceſſity and advantage of cultivating in himſelf, as well as the peculiar importance of recommending to others, the principles and affections expreſſed in theſe Addreſſes. He need not ſay, that pain and ſickneſs are trying ſituations, and that the proſpect of diſſolution is a very ſerious one. But ſurely, if there be any conduct in life that merits the name of Wiſdom, it is to ſecure unfailing ſources of comfort in thoſe events; and above all to take care, that when the laſt

expe-

experiment comes to be made, it ſhall be found a ſafe experiment; ſince, if it ſhould prove otherwiſe, it cannot be repeated; the miſcarriage would be final, and the loſs irreparable.

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ADDRESS I.

ON

A VIEW OF THE SEA.

I.

FROM this temple, ſeated on a lofty cliff, and open on every ſide, to behold the beauty and grandeur of thy works, almighty Maker, from this terreſtrial temple, permit an humble, but delighted worſhipper, to lift his heart and voice towards thy glorious ſanctuary in heaven. Vouchſafe to receive his addreſs, proceeding from no hypocritical lips, but from a deep and

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ADDRESS I.

ON

A VIEW OF THE SEA.

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reverential conviction of thy auguſt preſence, thou all-pervading Deity. Pardon whatever thy pure eyes diſcern amiſs in thy frail, offending creature, whoſe only truſt is in thy infinite mercy; and raiſe his thoughts to the elevation of his theme.

II.

In this place of ſecurity, I view unaffrighted, though not unawed, the majeſtic Ocean ſpread out before me. Stupendous image of thy power, omnipotent Creator; nor yet leſs of thy benevolence, univerſal Parent! Was it not formed by thee,

thee, to unite in bonds of mutual intercourſe thy wide-extended family of mankind, to carry through various and diſtant nations the reſpective productions and diſcoveries of each, to relieve or diminiſh their mutual wants, and diſſeminate the bleſſings of knowledge and humanity unto the ends of the earth?

III.

I lament before thee, heavenly Father, that this illuſtrious inſtance of thy goodneſs hath, by the depravity of men, been often perverted to far other purpoſes. How often,

alas, is it made ſubſervient to the worſt deſigns of avarice and ambition, to wicked policy, hoſtile invaſion, and deſolating war! Praiſed be that divine Revelation, which opens a proſpect into better days. "Let the floods clap their hands, "the multitude of the iſles ſhout "for joy, and the inhabitants of "the world break forth into ſing-"ing." The great Meſſiah's kingdom will come, in all its plenitude of happineſs. Sin and ſorrow will flee away; injuſtice and oppreſſion give place to righteous laws and good government; and freedom, truth, and peace, be eſtabliſhed

on

on foundations firm as yonder rocks, broad as that ſea, and permanent as the everlaſting hills.

IV.

When from this height I look abroad upon the boundleſs deep as far as my eye can reach; when raiſing it "I conſider thy heavens, "the work of thy fingers;" when at night, aſſiſted by the teleſcope, I more accurately contemplate "the moon and the ſtars which "thou haſt ordained;" when from a ſurvey ſo vaſt and aſtoniſhing I ſtrive to frame the moſt enlarged conceptions of thy Creation, and

of Thyſelf, I am loſt in the immenſity which ſurrounds me; I am overwhelmed by that infinitude which I can never comprehend; I am utterly confounded at my own littleneſs, amidſt the ſpacious Univerſe, and from the depth of ſelf-abaſement can only breathe out the language of thy ancient ſervant, "What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the ſon of man "that thou viſiteſt him?" In himſelf, O Lord, he is nothing, yea, "leſs than nothing, and vanity." But by thy favourable regard, whoſe condeſcenſion is equal to thy greatneſs, he riſes

to

to importance and dignity. "For "thou haſt made him a little lower "than the angels, and haſt crowned "him with glory and honour. "Thou madeſt him to have domi- "nion over the works of thy "hands: thou has put all things "under his feet; all ſheep and "oxen; yea, and the beaſts of the "field, the fowl of the air, and "the fiſh of the ſea, and what- "ſoever paſſeth through the paths "of the ſea."

V.

But who can number the tribes, or tell the diverſity of living crea-

tures, with which thou haſt repleniſhed this mighty receptacle of waters; fitting all to enjoy their native element, and many to ſupply a rich and wholeſome nouriſhment for man? May he receive it with thankſgiving, as one of thoſe benefits, that, when placed within his power, were intended to employ his induſtry, and ſtrengthen him for thy ſervice! Nor would I forget to acknowledge that benignant Providence, which hath in ſo many other ways rendered the ſame element conducive to health and comfort, by furniſhing ſtores of ſalt to ſeaſon and preſerve our food, by

refreſhing the adjacent coaſts with ſalutary breezes, by invigorating the weak, and reſtoring the diſeaſed, that bathe in its briny waves.

VI.

Neither doth thy kindneſs, Father of mercies, ſtop here. To all the reſt thou haſt ſuperadded entertainment for the contemplative mind, in that marvellous variety of things, both ſmall and great, with which thou haſt adorned the ſhores, the rocks, and the caverns of the ſea; which, the more they are ſought out by ſuch as take pleaſure

ſure in them, muſt ever be admired the more. And how conſpicuous, O God, are thy power, thy wiſdom, and thy watchful care, in binding with a girdle of ſand the impetuous main, ſo that its mightieſt billows cannot break through, to overflow the earth, and drown the nations, as at the general Deluge; while the winds and tides, in ever-changing ſucceſſion, purify its waters, preſent a proſpect always new, and further by thy bleſſing the beneficial communications of trade and commerce! "Oh that men would "praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs,

"and

" and for his wonderful works to
" the children of men!"

VII.

Now the ſky is ſerene: the ſun ſhines forth in his ſtrength: the ſea is ſmoothed into a liquid plain; and gentle gales, ſporting on its ſurface, waft alike the ſtately veſſel and the little bark. Preſerver of mankind, guard them in their courſe, and bring them to their deſired haven. When arrived there, let them not forget to whom they owe their ſafety. And may all " who go down to the ſea in
" ſhips, and ſee thy wonders in
" the

"the deep," learn to ſeek thy protection, and fortify their hearts againſt the dangers that encompaſs them, not by blind courage, or brutal inſenſibility, but by "doing "juſtly, loving mercy, and walk- "ing humbly with Thee!"

VIII.

Let the wicked tremble at the terrors of the ocean, leſt it ſwallow them up in its fury, and they ſink into a yet more tremendous abyſs, prepared by thy juſtice for the workers of iniquity. But from threatening rocks, and lurking quickſands, from the howling tempeſt,

tempeſt, the yawning gulph, and the thick darkneſs, dreadful to conſcious guilt, what have the righteous ultimately to fear? Art not thou their Father and their Friend? Art not thou "the God "of the ſea, as well as of the dry "land?" Are not they ſtill within the embrace of thy ſupporting arm? Thou wilt be their refuge in the time of trouble. Thou wilt ſave them from impending ſhipwreck, or deliver them from the midſt of its horrors, and guide their enfeebled but grateful ſteps to the dwellings of pity, where they ſhall find ſhelter and conſolation;

or

or elſe, if it be thy pleaſure to ſet them for ever beyond the reach of calamity and peril, thou wilt receive their ſpirits into thy paternal boſom.

IX.

Roll on, ye deſtined ages, till the plans of Providence are all fulfilled. At length the morning of the Reſurrection will dawn, when the ſea ſhall give up its prey, and the dead ſhall riſe incorruptible. Happy period! Conſummation moſt devoutly to be wiſhed! Then ſhall I meet in perfect glory a much-loved and long-

long-lamented Brother; the ſtay of his father's houſe, the comfort of his widowed mother, my counſellor and example in youth; of whom the devouring waves were permitted to bereave us, at the inſtant that we were rejoicing in hope to welcome his return from foreign lands, full of honour, and rich in accumulated treaſures of learning, eloquence, and wiſdom. So it ſeemed good in thy ſight, myſterious, unerring Ruler. "Clouds "and darkneſs are round about "thee; but righteouſneſs and "judgement are the habitation of "thy throne." That ineſtimable man

man was taken from the evil to come. By an end, which ignorance or impatience would have deemed untimely, of what public diſaſters, and private ſorrows did he not eſcape the pain of partaking! With what congratulations would his venerable anceſtors, and a bright circle of ſeraphic ſpirits, hail his enlightened and benevolent ſoul, on gaining ſo early the ſhore of immortality! With what tranſports, till then unfelt, would his riſing faculties join that high aſſembly, to celebrate the praiſe of his and their Parent and Lord!

X.

X.

Nor wilt thou be angry, if emulating ſuch celeſtial harmony, I preſume to add my imperfect note. Art thou not alſo my Parent and my Lord, although I am yet "a "ſojourner on earth?" Deign to receive my humble tribute of love and homage. Accept my warmeſt gratitude, in particular, for having formed me capable of theſe contemplations, and inclined my heart to entertain them. Let me never think of thy Majeſty but with the deepeſt veneration; never dare to mention thy name

with raſhneſs or indifference; nor live to become a careleſs ſpectator of the beautiful and magnificent objects, in which thou haſt manifeſted thy perfections with ſuch ſurpaſſing glory. May the ſpirit of devotion, they have at this time called forth, be nouriſhed and increaſed by frequent reflections on a ſcene ſo peculiarly adapted, as that which I behold, to exalt the imagination, and ſtrike the mind with inexpreſſible ſolemnity. May I ever ſtudy to keep my paſſions in ſubjection to the awful Power "who "ſaith to the Sea, Hither ſhalt "thou come, but no farther: here "ſhall

" ſhall thy proud waves be ſtaid." And let that irreſiſtible voice which ſtills their rage, command every tumult of my breaſt into a calm.

XI.

When from the immediate effects of thy omnipotence, great Creator, I turn to obſerve the inferior works of Men, I would not forget that divine energy, without which nothing noble, uſeful, or pleaſing, can be accompliſhed. To this ſecret but powerful influence I trace the proportions, accommodations, and ornaments of the goodly fabric which now attracts

my attention. The ſkill that contrived, and the diligence that executed the whole, were from thee, O God, the giver of every talent, and the inſpirer of every virtue. To thee its Maſter looks up with reverence. Thy workmanſhip in Nature thou haſt diſpoſed him to ſtudy through all its viſible degrees, from whatever is moſt extenſive and ſublime, to its moſt minute and ſeemingly inconſiderable parts; inconſiderable, only to ſuperficial beholders. To his, and to every eye illuminated by ſcience, and ſtrengthened by the microſcopic glaſs, the ſmalleſt are not leſs

diſtinguiſhed

diſtinguiſhed than the greateſt by the ſignatures of ſupreme intelligence. From the delight and improvement attending ſuch occupations, incline him daily to aſpire after a higher exiſtence, in which he may "ſee thee face to face," and contemplate with unceaſing admiration the iſſues of almighty wiſdom and goodneſs in their ſource. While he remains in this ſtate of imperfection, may he ever ſeek his happineſs in the purſuit of truth, in the practice of temperance, in the works of charity, in the pleaſures of a Philoſopher, and of a Chriſtian! And from theſe

may

may he ever derive that ſincere ſatisfaction, which neither opulence, nor rank, nor power could beſtow!

XII.

For myſelf, thy unworthy ſervant, I will bleſs thee while I live, that in the decline of my days thou art giving me to enjoy the leiſure and ſerenity of a peaceful retreat, where by pious meditation and fervent prayer, a ready ſubmiſſion to thy Providence, and a growing complacency in thy Works, the conſtant exerciſe of good-will towards men, and the elevating hope of the Goſpel, I may double my diligence

to

to prepare for the inevitable hour. And when it ſhall arrive, grant, moſt merciful Father, through the mediation of my divine Maſter and only Saviour, that I may obtain an eaſy paſſage from this to a happier region, and be admitted to worſhip thee in the temple of eternity. Amen.

ADDRESS II.

ON

SALVATION BY CHRIST.

ADDRESS II.

ON

SALVATION BY CHRIST.

I.

SUPREME of Beings, I have ſeen thy glory in thy works; more eſpecially in the World of Waters created by thy hand, controuled by thy authority, and by thy gracious providence directed to ends the moſt important and beneficial. I have alſo, in the efforts of human art, ſeen that omnipotent agency, which operates through all, without

which

which there is nothing wiſe and nothing ſtrong. Separate from thee, "man in his beſt eſtate is "altogether vanity," the child of weakneſs, and the heir of ſorrow. United to thy ſovereign Spirit, he is ſolaced, magnanimous, and bleſſed; unappalled by danger, and unconquered by diſtreſs. "Underneath him are everlaſting arms." He ſhall paſs in ſecurity "through "the fire, and through the water. "The water ſhall not overflow "him, nor the fire kindle upon "him." Strengthened by thy power, and animated by a ſenſe of thy favour, he ſhall triumph over death itſelf,

itſelf, though aſſailing him in its moſt terrible array. The fierceſt conflagration, or the blackeſt tempeſt, would only convey him ſooner to the boſom of untroubled reſt in the regions of immortal day. "The ungodly are not ſo, but "are like the chaff which the "wind driveth away." This wide Creation affords not ſafety to thy enemies. "If they take the wings "of the morning, and fly to the ut-"moſt part of the Sea, even there "ſhall thy hand find them, and thy "right hand" preſs them into miſery. But who can tell what aggravated woes await the impenitent beyond

beyond the boundary of time? Who can unfold the horrors of outer darkneſs? Ah, may I never know what it is to fall without hope under the weight of thy diſpleaſure, great Almighty!

II.

But how ſhall I eſcape it? "I "have ſinned againſt Heaven, and "in thy ſight," my Father, my Benefactor, and my God, whom by numberleſs ties of duty, gratitude, juſtice, piety, I was bound to ſerve and honour. I am overwhelmed with confuſion at the ſight

ſight of my unworthineſs in ſo pure a preſence. This beautiful temple, this noble eminence, the majeſtic Ocean, now aſſuming its mildeſt form, and with redoubled luſtre giving back the rays of the ſun, thoſe exhilarating ſcenes, that ſo lately inſpired me with gladneſs, are on a ſudden become ineffectual to cheer. To me Nature ſmiles in vain, when I think of having offended the Lord of Nature. Where ſhall I look, or whither ſhall I turn, for relief under the painful recollection?

III.

Propitious Divinity, I behold an object* that inſtantly conſoles me, by calling to my remembrance thy willingneſs to pardon, and to ſave. My heart leaps for joy at the name of thine Anointed, the meek and lowly King of Zion, the loving and beloved Deliverer of mankind. Loudly would I celebrate thy perfections as diſplayed in this wondrous frame of things. But in the more wondrous work of Redemption they ſhine with ſuperior ſplendor, and demand a nobler ſong.

IV.

* Chriſt-church in the neighbourhood.

IV.

In Creation I contemplate a world produced from unreſiſting chaos. In Redemption, I ſee it recovered from the darkneſs and diſorder of wilful tranſgreſſion. "In the beginning thy Spirit "moved upon the face of the "deep," and a fair harmonious univerſe aroſe. "Thou ſpakeſt the "word, and it was done: thou "gaveſt the command, and it ſtood "faſt." But how often didſt thou ſpeak to ſinners, and they regarded thee not! They heard unconcerned the thunder of Heaven; nor did the

melody of Earth allure them to their duty. While the creatures above and below addreſſed them on thy behalf, they refuſed to hearken; till, touched and won by thy tender mercies in Chriſt Jeſus, they yielded to the charm of divine love, and fled from their ſins to a forgiving Deity.

V.

Long had they defied the threatenings of thy Law, and deſpiſed the warnings of the Prophets. Miracles of power aſtoniſhed, but did not reform them. Miracles of deliverance were followed only with

a

a paſſing impreſſion. Frequent chaſtiſement was ſoon forgotten; and infinite forbearance but hardened them the more. At laſt, "when the fulneſs of time was "come," Chriſt appeared, the Image of thy benevolence, the Miniſter of thy grace; and a word, a look, from him, ſufficed to melt the heart with contrition, and bend the will into obedience.

VI.

It was not by worldly might, or royal magnificence, by the arts of policy, or the pomp of eloquence; it was not by promiſing

aught that is of higheſt eſtimation among the ſons of earth, nor yet by ſparing their corruptions, or countenancing their errors; it was not by any or by all of theſe, that the Son of thy love obtained his victories over the minds of men. Triumphs among the fooliſh, the ſenſual, and the proud; triumphs gained by means that ſerved only to ſooth them in their blindneſs, to nouriſh their crimes, and augment their miſery; the vain and ſuperficial triumphs of a day, he left to thoſe that admired and purſued them. His was a far different deſign; "to turn men from

"darkneſs

" darkneſs unto light, and from " the power of Satan" to the practice of righteouſneſs, and the glories of immortality. In proſecution of his benevolent purpoſe, he graciouſly ſtooped to aſſume our nature, " and make him- " ſelf of no reputation." But, as though it were not ſufficient to veil his original honours with the garment of frail humanity, he ſubmitted " to take upon him the " form of a ſervant," to be born in the loweſt condition, and the meaneſt circumſtances; to become " a man of ſorrows and acquainted " with grief, deſpiſed and rejected " of men, and not to have where

"to lay his head." Thus it pleaſed him, who could have commanded the riches and applauſe of the world, to throw a ſhade upon both, that neither might be eſteemed by his followers neceſſary to happineſs. And at length, to impreſs them more deeply with the greatneſs of humility, the worth of reſignation, and the tranſcendent excellence of divine charity, he voluntarily ſuffered a painful and ignominious death for their ſins.

VII.

"Bleſſed be he that came in the "name of the Lord, to ſave us;" that

that came in thy name, Almighty Father, inveſted with pre-eminent authority, "anointed with "the oil of gladneſs above his "fellows." To prove his commiſſion from thee, he performed works which no man had ever performed; "he ſpake as no man "ever ſpake. Grace was poured in-"to his lips." He convinced and penetrated his hearers by the ſimplicity of truth: he aſtoniſhed and awed them by its majeſty. The clouds and darkneſs that reſted on a future exiſtence he removed, as far as was expedient for thoſe who were ordained to "live by faith, and

"not

" not by ſight." The retributions of Eternity he ſet before them, in language the moſt powerful and affecting. Pointing to the narrow but pleaſant path of Heaven, he earneſtly called them to follow him thither. " The broad" but treacherous " way, that leadeth to de-" ſtruction," he no leſs kindly admoniſhed them to ſhun. The upright however obſcure, the penitent however cenſured by men, he received and encouraged with ineffable mildneſs and condeſcenſion. He comforted them that mourned. " He fed his flock " like a ſhepherd: he gathered

" the

" the lambs with his arm, and " carried them in his boſom, and " gently led thoſe that were with " young." His life exhibited a pattern of lowlineſs and goodneſs, of patient affliction and heroic ſelf-denial before unſeen; and his Death upon the Croſs was a ſacrifice worthy of thy acceptance. There he manifeſted the perfection of obedience: there " he ſuffered, the " juſt for the unjuſt, that he might " bring us to thee." By his Humiliation " they who humble them-" ſelves ſhall be exalted:" by his Atonement they who obey him are ſaved. But, bleſſed God, who can

ſpeak

ſpeak the power of his Reſurrection, the grandeur of his Aſcenſion, the prevalence of his Mediation, or the triumphs of his everlaſting Goſpel? Who can repreſent the beauty or efficacy of this laſt and beſt diſpenſation? "It is the doing of the "Lord, and marvellous in our "eyes." Nor in ours only. Well may you, ye Spirits of light, pry with eagerneſs and wonder into this great myſtery. Well might you, ye Sons of God, ye holy and benevolent Angels, ſing together, and ſhout for joy, at the reſtoration of a fallen Univerſe. "Glory to God in the higheſt:

"on

" on earth peace: good-will to-
" wards men!"

VIII.

Merciful Heaven, what proſpects riſe to my enraptured view! " All old things are done away: " behold, all things are become " new." The light of truth dawns upon the darkeſt minds, like that of the morning on the benighted traveller. The loweſt diſciple of thy Son is wiſer than the greateſt teachers of Pagan philoſophy. The ſweetneſs of pardon deſcends into the hearts of the contrite, " like " rain upon the mowen graſs."

The

The humble and ſincere are called to rejoice in the aſſurance of ſalvation. The ſouls of men are renovated by thy Spirit, as the face of the earth is revived by returning ſpring. The agitations of appetite, and the ſtorms of paſſion, ſubſide into a ſacred calm. Diſcord and hatred, malice, envy, and mad ambition, vaniſh before "the Prince of Peace." Crowns and ſceptres are laid at his feet. All the Charities walk in his train. Virtue is invigorated by faith, and gathers from the Croſs wreaths of immortality. I am tranſported with

with the thought, that, as Chriſt " was delivered for our offences, ſo " he roſe again for our juſtification. " He is the reſurrection and the " life: whoſoever believe in him, " though they were dead, they " ſhall yet live." Our bodies, now the ſeat of ſo many diſorders, the ſource of ſo many ſnares, the occaſion of ſo much toil and care, at laſt the prey of corruption, ſhall one day aſſume a higher and happier form. They ſhall ſpring from the diſhonours of the grave, at the voice of the Arch-angel, by the power of Jeſus; and

" we

"we ſhall be like him, be-
"cauſe we ſhall ſee him as he
"is." We ſhall dwell for ever in his animating preſence; forever free from pain; ſubject to ſickneſs, decay, and diſſolution no more; arrayed in perfect beauty, ſecured in perfect innocence; and, by his approving ſentence, exalted to felicity unutterable and endleſs. With ſuch proſpects and ſuch hopes, what have thy ſervants to fear, or why ſhould our hearts be troubled, in life or in death?

But

XI.

But ah, my God, how ſhall thoſe "eſcape, who neglect ſo "great ſalvation?" Open, I beſeech thee, their eyes, to ſee their dangerous eſtate, the neceſſity of immediate amendment, the inſufficiency of human aid. Inſpire them with faith in the ſovereign Phyſician, who alone can cure the maladies of the ſoul; till reſtored to ſpiritual health, and filled with joy and thankfulneſs, they are enabled "to run in the way of "thy commandments." May ſuch as are ready to ſink under the burden of conſcious guilt and diſorder,

diſorder, ſighing in ſecret for deliverance, and longing after the pure and peaceful pleaſures of Religion, perceive themſelves ſupported by the grace of Jeſus! Diſpoſe them to accept the invitation of that divine Philanthropiſt who ſaid, "Come unto me, "all ye that labour and are heavy "laden, and I will give you "reſt." May they have the happineſs to feel that he is "mighty to ſave!" May they firmly believe, that he is too juſt to "break "the bruiſed reed," too generous to take advantage of lamented folly,

or

involuntary weakneſs, too faithful not to fulfil the word on which he hath cauſed his ſervants in all generations to rely.

X.

For ſuch as, after manifold engagements and ſolemn vows, have forſaken his ſervice, "denying "the Lord that bought them, and "opening the mouths of his "enemies to blaſpheme," Father of mercies, hear my prayer, and "renew them again by repent-"ance." May they inſtantly flee the occaſions that enſnared them, and, like Peter, weep bit-

terly; nor ever ceaſe to cheriſh a tender and ingenuous ſorrow, till by unwearied ſupplications, the ſtricteſt vigilance, and the ſevereſt ſelf-denial, they are recovered to their duty, and to thy favour. Permit me alſo, O my God, to intercede for thoſe unhappy men, that have to this day rejected equally the claims and the offers of him who came to redeem them. Awaken their attention: conquer their prejudices: teach them, before it be too late, to conſider well the danger of oppoſing his authority, whom thou haſt "ſet as King "upon thy holy hill of Zion;"

to

to whom, for his obedience unto death, thou haſt "given a Name "above every name, that at the "name of Jeſus every knee might "bow, and every tongue confeſs;" of whom Moſes ſpake; whom the Prophets long before his appearing foretold, and to whom the Apoſtles, that had ſeen him after his reſurrection, gave witneſs; who while he abode on earth wrought miracles of unexampled power and beneficence, and when he aſcended into Heaven, qualified his Miniſters to preach and propagate his Religion among the nations. And where, O Lord, have its adverſa-

ries found an inſtitution alike honourable to thy perfections, alike ſuited to the wants and wiſhes of mankind, fraught with equal conſolation to the penitent and the afflicted, formed alike to render its diſciples virtuous and humble, peaceable and gentle, moderate in proſperity, patient in ſuffering, "ſtedfaſt and immoveable, and al-"ways abounding in good works?" If they have not found, if they cannot find aught to be compared with this glorious light, would they quench it in their rage, and leave in its place ſhadows and phantoms, unavailing conjectures, diſtracting

doubts,

doubts, and endleſs uncertainty? Bleſſed God, what will they do, "when their feet ſhall ſtumble "on the dark mountains?" Who ſhall comfort them in their laſt agonies? Who ſhall plead for them at the judgement-ſeat of him whoſe power they diſputed or defied, whoſe proffered friendſhip they treated with ſcorn?

XI.

And where, alas! ſhall thoſe appear who call him "Lord, "Lord, but do not the things "which he ſaith;" falſe pre-

tenders to zeal and ſanctity; proud and uncharitable "hypo- "crites, who truſt in themſelves "that they are righteous, and "deſpiſe others; enemies to the "Croſs of Chriſt," who would transform it into an inſtrument of unrighteouſneſs, which it was deſigned to deſtroy; who would make him "the Miniſter of ſin, "that died to redeem them from "all iniquity?" Searcher of hearts, diſcover them to themſelves, in their aggravated guilt and wretchedneſs. Convince them, that their pretences are vain, and their profeſſions impious; that "without

"works

"works faith is dead," and without ſincerity, religion but a name which cannot impoſe on thy omniſcience, and will only draw upon them heavier condemnation. Spare them, O God, to repent of their great wickedneſs, endue them with integrity, and teach them to "worſhip thee, who art "a Spirit, in ſpirit and in "truth."

XII.

Preſerve me, moſt merciful Father, from hypocriſy, ſelf-deceit, and all uncharitableneſs. Preſerve me from doubting, for a moment, the

the divine evidence of the Goſpel, or diſtruſting, even in the darkeſt hour, the wiſdom and benignity of its Author. Oh, preſerve me from the baſeneſs of denying him on any occaſion. And "God forbid that I "ſhould glory, ſave in his Croſs." By the power of his Croſs may I be crucified to the love of the world, with all its ſhort unſatisfying vanities! And finally grant, that being reconciled to thee by his death and interceſſion, inſtructed in thy will by his doctrine and precepts, and by his example, promiſes, and aid conformed to it, I may look up to thy throne with hope of acceptance,

behold

behold the purity of thy nature tempered with paternal grace, revere and love thee at the ſame time, admire and rejoice in thy works more and more, and from all I ſee above, around, and below, riſe with increaſing ardours of devotion to the Fountain of Goodneſs and of Happineſs. Amen.

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ADDRESS III.

ON

CONTEMPLATION.

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ON

CONTEMPLATION.

I

DELIGHTED with the bleſſings and wonders of Creation, tranſported by the yet higher wonders and bleſſings of Redemption, my ſoul would aſcend with freſh aſpirations to thee, O God, the origin of both; to thee, the greateſt and beſt of beings, the greateſt becauſe the beſt; from whom alone proceeds whatever is good and great;

to

to whom, therefore, be all the glory from all thy reaſonable offſpring. To praiſe thee, thou Sovereign Parent, is ſurely the moſt becoming exerciſe of reaſon; and they are the happieſt who perform it moſt worthily; the bright aſſembly of Saints and Seraphim, who circle thy throne rejoicing, and with unbroken harmony celebrate thy perfections. Fain would thy ſervant here below anticipate their joys. Fain would he learn their language, and join, however feebly, their elevated chorus, "The Lord God Omnipotent "reigneth, Hallelujah!"

II.

II.

Compaſſionate Father, forgive the languor and unevenneſs with which my ſpirit, preſſed down by the weight of mortality, attempts ſo high a ſervice. Ah, that my heart were in better tune, and more alive to gratitude, love, and admiration, to the nobleſt affections of every mind in uniſon with the melody of Nature, and of Heaven! Almighty Maker, aſſiſt my weak endeavours. Let no jarring paſſion diſturb my thoughts. Teach me to correct every irregular movement, and diligently to cheriſh

that

that ſpirit of pious Contemplation which ſooths the breaſt into ſerenity, ſupplies devotion with its ampleſt ſtrains, and lifts the faculties to him who gave them.

III.

What ſhall I render, O Lord, for the exalted ſatisfaction of tracing thy attributes in this capacious univerſe, for the tranſcendent privilege of walking with thee, amidſt the glory of thy works? Diſpoſe me more attentively to ſtudy, though I can never fully comprehend, them. Unable as I

am, in a ſurvey ſo immenſe and ſo various, to diſcover the contrivance or the uſe of many parts, I have yet abundant cauſe to believe that they are worthy of their Author; ſuch conſiſtency of deſign, ſuch conſummate wiſdom, ſuch boundleſs goodneſs are conſpicuous in all the reſt! I rejoice in the reflexion, that the farther enquiry is extended by the largeſt and moſt enlightened minds, they meet yet brighter marks of intelligence and benignity, and are more fully convinced that thoſe appearances which the ignorant and the diſcontented have cenſured as

blemiſhes in the plan, or defects in the execution, are to be numbered among the ſtrongeſt demonſtrations of thy ſkill and care, almighty Architect. But, O my God, if views, which this limited ſtate of humanity renders at the utmoſt imperfect, yield ſo much delight, what will it be when every remaining cloud, that now obſcures thy workmanſhip, ſhall vaniſh, and the light of Eternity, breaking forth on our tranſported eyes, ſhall give us to behold it in all its magnitude and ſplendor?

IV.

The whole creation is full of thee. Forbid that the beauty, or diverſity which it diſplays, ſhould become a veil to hide thee from my ſight, where, "by the things that are "made, thy power and Godhead "may be clearly ſeen." Where, for the trial of my faith, thou art pleaſed "to hold back the face of "thy throne," may I ſtill perceive the influence of the preſent Divinity, and ſtill adore the great Supreme! When from that elevated throne I am favoured with the radiations of light and mercy, may I lay

myſelf open to them with thankfulneſs, humility and meekneſs!

V.

"Where is the wiſe? where is "the ſcribe? where is the diſputer "of this world?" Thou haſt ſhown me, O Lord, that "profeſſing to "be wiſe, they become fools." Their confidence abuſes their underſtanding. Beguiled by the glare of novelty, and fired by the ambition of fame for freedom of thought and diſcernment above others, in matters where docility and diffidence are chiefly required, they turn from the ſober purſuit of truth,

truth, and are led away into pernicious errors. "The Heavens "declare thy glory; and the firmament ſhoweth thy handy "work. Day unto day uttereth "ſpeech; and night unto night "teacheth knowledge." The eloquence of the Creation, proclaiming thy greatneſs, and pleading for thy rights, is heard and underſtood by the honeſt but unpretending believer, by the ſelf-denied and ſingle-hearted worſhipper. Neither the illiterate hind, nor the untutored ſavage, have been wholly inſenſible to the language of Nature. But the ungodly man, who

is "ſpoiled by vain philoſophy," and perplexed "by the oppoſitions "of ſcience falſely ſo called, ſtop-"peth his ear, like the deaf adder, "and will not hear the voice of "the Charmer, though charming "never ſo wiſely." Miſled by the cavils of infidelity, and loſt in the maze of metaphyſics, he wanders forever in a dark and crooked path, farther and yet farther from the ſtreight and chearful road that leads to everlaſting day.

VI.

Save me, Heavenly Father, from the boaſted benevolence of thoſe, who,

who, while they promiſe liberty from the ſhackles of ſuperſtition and prejudice, are labouring to overthrow every principle, which thou haſt eſtabliſhed among mankind as the foundation of their virtue and their happineſs. Deliver me from the falſe pretexts of thoſe whoſe "tender mercies are cruelty;" who would rob the fainting ſpirit of its richeſt cordial, tear from the children of ſorrow their moſt powerful ſupport, and leave without reward or expectation the generous toils of the true patriot, the uſeful and arduous reſearches of the devout philoſopher,

pher, the patient conflicts and heroic ſacrifices of the follower of Jeſus. May I ever regard with abhorrence their impious ſyſtem, who would transform this beautiful and glorious Univerſe into a ſcene of deſolation, by excluding thy creative energy, and baniſhing that ſovereign preſence which directs, enlivens, and adorns it! Defend, I beſeech thee, every virtuous mind, and every unwary youth, from the deceitfulneſs of all that are wickedly ſtriving to undermine and deſtroy "whatſo-"ever things are juſt, and true, "and venerable," and holy among "men;

"men;" whatſoever things can endear them to each other as members of thy Family, or recommend them to thee as ſubjects of thy Government; whatſoever things become their dignity and their hopes as immortal beings. Inſpire them with an utter and unabating deteſtation of that depravity, which, not contented to diſturb the peace and order of human life, ſeeks with frigid argumentation, deliberate ſubtilty, or wanton mirth, to damp and degrade the Heaven-born ſoul that was made after thine image, and at laſt to ſink it with all its faculties

faculties and honours into the fearful abyſs of Nothing.

VII.

But, bleſſed Creator, is it indeed poſſible that ſuch indignity to thee, ſuch inſenſibility to the deareſt intereſts of human kind, ſhould be found in creatures called Rational? Alas! who can tell to what ſtrong deluſions thoſe may be abandoned in thy righteous judgement, who ſo prophanely pervert the invaluable gift of reaſon, who turn it ſo audaciouſly againſt the Giver? Moſt truly hath thy word declared, that "the Fool hath ſaid in his

"heart,

" heart, There is no God." In his heart the malady begins. " Through " the pride of his heart, he will not " ſeek after thee." Thy juſtice is offended, and he is conſcious of his danger: He ſecretly hates the Power whom he dreads. His evil paſſions, whether more open or diſguiſed, increaſe his averſion to thy laws. Thence he is eager to queſtion thy exiſtence. He wiſhes and ſtrives to diſbelieve it. He wiſhes and ſtrives in vain. However he may argue, whatever he may boaſt, chilling apprehenſions will ariſe: ſpectres of horror will haunt him in the ſilent watches of the

the night: they will purſue him at noon-day: in the midſt of ſociety they will poiſon his pleaſures; nor will the voice of laughter, or the face of gaiety, prove him to be free from inward anguiſh. His conſcience takes part with thee. "Thy terrors make him afraid:" thy thunder ſtartles, thy lightening flaſhes conviction into his ſoul. Although in his folly he "makes "a mock of ſin, and utters great "ſwelling words of vanity;" when pain, and grief, and ſickneſs, and decay come upon him, where ſhall he find refuge from thy diſpleaſure? Whither ſhall he flee from himſelf?

One

One reſource, one dreadful reſource, he hath long endeavoured to hope may yet remain; that when the laſt meſſenger arrives, he ſhall eſcape in night eternal.

VIII.

Merciful Deity, is there then no other reſource for this man, no better refuge? Permit thy ſinful ſervant, who hath "taſted and "ſeen that thou art good," to implore thy pity for a fellow-creature that little thought, when he entered on "the error of his way," how far it might entice him from truth and happineſs!

Spare

Spare him, O Lord, ſpare him to repent, if it be not yet too late. Change his heart by thy almighty Spirit, if conſiſtent with the laws of thy righteous Government. Would there not be "joy among "the angels that are in Heaven," if by an extraordinary contrition, and a triumphant faith, this very man were made a trophy of peculiar grace?

IX.

But however thy unerring will may determine in reſpect to him, and offenders of his enormity, hear me,

me, Parent of benevolence, Oh hear me, when with redoubled fervour I beſeech thee to guard the young and the ingenuous from the ſnares of unbelief. Lead them forth into the lovely and inſtructive walks of Nature. Diſpoſe them to view, with the ſerious collected eye of Contemplation, the ſpacious earth, the boundleſs ſea, the awful rocks, the lofty hills, and the fruitful valleys; the fields, the flocks, and the herds; the ſprings and the rivers, with "the green "paſtures by the ſtill waters;" the ſolemn woods and groves; the chearful garden adorned with trees,

and

and herbs, and flowers, "after their "kind;" the ſmiling ſky, and yonder refulgent ſun. In theſe may they learn to admire thy perfections! And when from theſe they look upon themſelves, and ſee how "wonderfully they are made," and feel what multiplied delights thou haſt given them to know, may they reflect with gladneſs that they live, not in a forlorn and fatherleſs world, but in a Creation over which the Creator preſides; may they acknowledge with gratitude and devotion, that "thou art "in all, and through all, and "over all, God bleſſed for ever,"

and

and for ever inclined to bleſs thy children.

X.

Heavenly Father, what ſatisfaction is his, who, often withdrawing from the tumult of buſineſs and the noiſe of folly, flies to the ſanctuary of divine Meditation, there recovers the compoſure of his mind, enjoys undiſturbed tranquillity, and taſtes that peace of thine "which "paſſeth all underſtanding!" What improvement, when in the ſilence of the paſſions he hearkens with profound attention to thy Voice within him, prompting each pious

thought, each charitable deed, each ardent desire after Immortality! What elevation, when conversant with the order and beneficence displayed on every side, he is taught to admire, and admiring to copy them, till he becomes like thee, "holy as thou art holy, and "merciful as thou art merciful!"

XI.

But, alas, it grieves me to look upon the multitudes immersed in sensuality, enslaved to covetousness, or by constant dissipation become incapable of thought. "They regard not the operations

"of

"of thy hand." Created by thy power, they ſay not, "Where is "God our Maker?" Maintained by thy providence, and "loaded "with thy benefits," they pay thee no tribute, "neither are they "thankful." The beaſts of the field, and the fowls of the air, have more feeling than they. "The "ox knoweth his owner, and the "aſs his maſter's crib: but they "do not know, they do not con-"ſider." The lark that mounts towards Heaven, with implicit gratitude chaunting thy praiſe, "the birds that ſing among the "branches," ſtraining in ſweet

emulation to warble forth the joy with which thou haſt inſpired them, upbraid thoſe ſons and daughters of men who neglect to join in the ſymphony. Father of ſpirits, awaken them to reaſon, and to duty. Show them the emptineſs of Sin, and the wiſdom of Religion. Oh, perſuade them that thoſe alone are in the path of happineſs, who ſeek it in glorifying thee, in doing good, and retiring, when they may, from the vanities of life, to contemplate in ſacred ſolitude the manifeſtations of divine Perfection.

XII.

XII.

How truly delightful to break away from clamour, confuſion, and diſcord, into a calm retreat, and there to harmoniſe with Nature, and with thee her God! What relief to the burdened and penſive mind, there to drop its cares, to ſhake off for a while thoſe anxious thoughts that too often entangle and depreſs it, and "as with the "wings of an eagle to mount up" to the ſerene region of pious hope and ſelf-enjoyment, from thence to look down upon the leſſening world, to pity the diſtraction of its

lovers, and triumph in the portion of the righteous!

XIII.

From privileges like these, O Lord, thy servants return to the offices of social virtue with renewed activity and vigour, acquire a greater superiority to the temptations of their state, and are armed to meet its difficulties and dangers with firmer resolution. Thus I read in thy holy Word, that when the pious and benevolent labours of the day were past, "Jesus went up "into a mountain apart to pray." And thus it was, that by conversing with thee, remote from interruption,

ruption, and nearer to thy ſeat of Majeſty in that ſublime retirement, his ſoul derived new ſtrength, lay open to the fulleſt emanations of thy paternal favour, and glowed with freſh ardour of zeal and charity to go about doing good, to teach, to ſuffer, and to die for mankind.

XIV.

But, O my Father and my God, where ſhall I find language or conceptions adequate to thy ineſtimable love, in the Redemption of the world by Jeſus Chriſt, that laſt and brighteſt diſcovery of thy attributes,

tributes, that divineſt object of human or angelic ſtudy? Here, indeed, all my faculties are ſwallowed up in wonder, veneration, and joy. Here my heart is overwhelmed with ſpeechleſs humility and thankfulneſs; and while I adore in ſilence this unequalled Myſtery, I would "behold in it, "as in a glaſs, thy Glory;" till by its transforming power I am "changed into the ſame image," prepared to "ſee thee as thou art," and through the interceſſion of my Saviour received to the Contemplations of Heaven. Amen.

ADDRESS IV.

ON

PROVIDENCE.

ADDRESS IV.

ON

PROVIDENCE.

I.

ALMIGHTY and moſt merciful God and Father, whoſe Workmanſhip in Nature I have beheld with pleaſure and admiration, whoſe Clemency to Mankind hath filled me with gratitude and joy unſpeakable, whom to contemplate I have found the ſweeteſt and ſublimeſt exerciſe; I would again lift my ſoul to thee: I would again

again adore thy perfections: I would rejoice in my relation to the Parent of men and angels, as a member of thy intellectual family, living under thy ſuperintendance, and formed with capacities to know, to love, and to worſhip thee for ever. Nor would I ceaſe to triumph more eſpecially when I call to mind the exalted honour thou haſt conferred on the children of Adam, in ſending thy illuſtrious Son, "the Heir of all "things, the Prince of life, and "the King of glory," to redeem them.

II.

II.

" All thy works praiſe thee, O " Lord; and all thy ſaints bleſs " thee." Yet multitudes of human beings continue ſilent and ſullen amidſt the united celebrations of Heaven and Earth. Thou haſt created all things in number, weight, and meaſure. Yet ſinners regard not the marvellous production; or if at any time they are amuſed with its beauty and magnificence, they forget to acknowledge its Author. Fed by thy bounty, they abuſe it. Enriched by thy treaſures, they employ them

to

to thy diſhonour. Protected by thy Government, they live in the violation of its laws. And though thou haſt magnified thy Mercy to the penitent by Jeſus Chriſt, they harden themſelves againſt his moſt gracious offers, and ſet at nought all thy counſels for their ſalvation. "Yet theſe are the ungodly that "proſper in their way," while the righteous man is bowed down with calamity, and ſunk in ſorrow. Thence they are elated with pride; virtue and piety are held in deriſion, and thy Providence is denied or blaſphemed. Incomprehenſible Jehovah, where ſhall I find a path

to

to conduct me through this maze? Or how ſhall I maintain, in the hour of trial and temptation, a ſtedfaſt belief of thy wiſdom, an unſhaken affiance in thy goodneſs?

III.

Of thy auguſt Adminiſtration, which includes the Univerſe, and enters into Eternity, it hath pleaſed thee, the Maker of us all, that in this dawn of our exiſtence we ſhould diſcern but a little portion. We perceive not the mutual influence and cloſe dependance of the infinitely

nitely diverſified parts, the general combination and mighty effect of the whole. But far from complaining of thy procedure, it becomes us to venerate and praiſe thee the more, for thus checking the boldneſs of preſumptuous men, teaching thy children deeper humility, and calling forth into higher exerciſe their faith and reſignation, that in due time they may receive a more abundant reward.

IV.

But while the ſecrets of thy Government are inſcrutable, and objects

jects only of ſilent awe, thou wilt not be offended, indulgent Father, if, in the ſober uſe of that underſtanding which thou haſt beſtowed, I meditate on the things which thy condeſcenſion hath revealed. From the wiſdom and fitneſs I am enabled to diſcern in the latter, I cannot but entertain a perſuaſion that the reſt are alſo fit and wiſe. From the regularity ſo viſibly predominant in thy Creation, I am led to infer the prevailing order of thy Providence, notwithſtanding the apparent inequalities which my narrow capacity cannot fully explain. By the connexion of cauſes

and effects, the conſiſtency of deſign, the ſimplicity of execution, and the ſimilarity of events, obſervable from generation to generation, I am taught to conclude that "the Lord our God is one "God;" that thou beholdeſt all things from the beginning unto the end, and diſpoſeſt them continually according to the immutable counſels of thy Will. It fills my heart with peculiar gladneſs, when I reflect on the conſpiration of thy Works and Ways to the greateſt good, though frequently oppoſed by the follies and corruptions of men: nor can I conceive

a thought more ſatisfactory to reaſon, more acceptable to thee, or more conſonant to the declarations of thy Word, than this that thou art carrying on, through the ſucceſſion of ages, a glorious ſcheme of rectitude and benevolence, for the reformation of tranſgreſſors, and the comfort, improvement, and final felicity of thy loyal ſubjects.

V.

When, in the courſe of thy Adminiſtration, thou ſeeſt meet to depart from the ordinary tenor of

thoſe laws which thou haſt fixed for the regulation of human affairs, forbid that I ſhould therefore queſtion thy wiſdom or equity. By ſuch diſpenſations thou art pleaſed to rouſe the attention of mankind, and impreſs a ſenſe of their dependance on thee, of the uncertainty adherent to temporal enjoyments, and the neceſſity of chuſing a portion beyond the reach of accident or time. Were the race always "to the ſwift, and the battle "to the ſtrong, riches to men of "underſtanding, and favour to "men of ſkill;" who, O Lord, would implore thy aſſiſtance, or thank

thank thee for ſucceſs? Where is the man who might not, in the moment of triumph, be tempted to forget thy co-operation, and to ſay in his pride, "By the power "of my hand," or the ſagacity of my counſels, "I have gotten "this?"

VI.

By whatever means proſperity falls to the lot of any, thou, O God, art ſtill to be acknowledged, and thou alone adored. Nature is but another name for thy omnipotent working; and whether by the eſtabliſhed methods of thy Providence,

or by thy particular intervention, its deſigns are accompliſhed, every ground of boaſting is excluded from the creatures whom thou haſt made. Their ſufficiency is only of thee. They "have no-"thing, which they have not re-"ceived." They can do nothing, but by the ability which thou haſt lent them; and when thou art pleaſed to withhold thy concurrence, their ſtrength is weakneſs, and their wiſdom is folly. Yet, O thou great Firſt Cauſe, what room were left for diligence or diſcretion, for ſtudy, foreſight, or contrivance, for active virtue or

juſt

juſt approbation, did not events moſt commonly correſpond to the probability of thoſe inferior and ſecondary cauſes which thou haſt appointed? "That no fleſh might "glory in thy preſence," thou makeſt thy arm to be often ſeen, in bending the affairs of men into a direction contrary to their views and expectations; but that thy ſervants might not bury their talents in the earth, thou haſt encouraged them to hope, that thou wilt proſper their faithful and prudent endeavours, or render "a little which the righteous "man hath, better than the riches

"of

"of many wicked;" promiſing at the ſame time to crown them in the end with immortal honour.

VII.

When men diſpute the truth of a particular Providence, as unworthy of thee, and inconſiſtent with the general Order of thy proceedings, their thoughts are narrow, and their objections vain. They forget that it was eaſy for thy wiſdom, from the beginning, to include in thy comprehenſive plan, whatever occaſional diſpenſations might in the progreſs of ages ſeem fit to thy rectitude or thy goodneſs. They

They forget, that thoſe diſpenſations are doubtleſs calculated to carry on the ſame benevolent and righteous ends, for which the prevailing conſtitution of thy Government was originally deviſed. They forget, that the hearts of all are in thy hand, and that by the immediate influence of thy Spirit, or the ſubordinate agency of mortal or immortal inſtruments, thou canſt turn them whitherſoever thou wilt, in a manner productive of meaſures and events connected with the welfare or chaſtiſement of thy ſubjects, at the inſtant that they feel themſelves free. Great

God,

God, what ſolicitude to pleaſe, what fear of offending thee, what thankfulneſs for every merciful interpoſition, and every gracious aſſiſtance, ſhould not theſe conſiderations inſpire? What fervent prayers for thy continued protection and aid? Oh defend me, thy feeble ſervant, from ſuch calamities as might overwhelm my nature; or let thy powerful arm ſupport me under them; and keep me, I beſeech thee, from ſuch temptations as might ſeduce my ſteps from the path of integrity. So diſpoſe and govern my heart, that I may think, and act, and live,

as

as in thy preſence, with a ſacred regard to thy authority, and never wilfully ſin againſt thee.

VIII.

If there exiſts a man who deliberately diſbelieves thy univerſal ſway, thou ſovereign and eternal Ruler, ſurely his reaſon is blinded by pride; ſurely his heart is frozen with indifference. "He lo-
"veth darkneſs rather than light,
"becauſe his deeds are evil," or his diſpoſitions corrupt. What docile and virtuous ſpirit would not rejoice to read thee in the great expanded volume of thy Works; or to follow

follow thee in thoſe beautiful Ways of truth and goodneſs, in which thou art leading thy children to the land of perfection? Who, that is conſcious of his high original, would not tremble at the apprehenſion, that the World around him was deſtitute of an all-informing and all-preſiding Mind; that he himſelf was the ſport of unmeaning chance, or the ſlave of fatal neceſſity? O my Father, what were I, thy weak and indigent creature, without thine aid; or whither ſhould I go for conſolation, if I could not apply to thee; if the joy that now warms my boſom

were

were extinguiſhed by the fear, that he who made the World hath forſaken it? Where is the vaunted force of intellect; where the pretended dignity of ſoul, that can harbour a thought ſo unnatural and incongruous, ſo diſhonourable to reaſon, ſo degrading to humanity?

IX.

"He that formed the ear, ſhall "he not hear? He that formed "the eye, ſhall he not ſee? He "that teacheth man knowledge, "ſhall himſelf not underſtand?" Bleſſed Creator, can I believe, that

that having brought into being this wondrous Univerſe, and ſtored it with inhabitants capable of everlaſting communion with thyſelf, can I believe that thou wouldſt abandon them to the blind indeterminate impulſe of what the ungodly and the unthinking call Fortune, which, like every other idol, is nothing? Can I believe, that having inſpired our earthly parents with a tender and unwearied ſolicitude for the welfare of their offspring, thou, "our "Father who art in Heaven," wouldſt leave us alone in a condition ſo full of danger?

X.

Becauſe we are ſurrounded with danger, becauſe we are ſubject to diſtreſs, ſhall we doubt of thy wiſdom, or of thy care? Among ten thouſand worlds which thou haſt made, what right have we to ſuppoſe that ours ſhould be the beſt? Or, becauſe there may be many better, ſhall we preſume to ſay that it is not good? What claim had man to be placed in a ſtate of unalterable virtue, or of unabated ſatisfaction? What ſhould hinder thy omnipotent hand from producing, through the wide expanſe

of

of Creation, an endleſs diverſity of intellectual beings, with proportionate degrees of power and enjoyment, where thoſe that are inferior muſt neceſſarily be defective, but where all contribute to the ſum of good? Shall men here below deem themſelves unhappy, becauſe their happineſs is not complete, becauſe thou haſt formed them men, and not angels? Which of thy creatures hath cauſe to complain, if, all things conſidered, his exiſtence is a bleſſing, or may yet be rendered ſuch; as ſurely it may, if he is not greatly wanting to himſelf?

XI.

XI.

When was the righteous man utterly forſaken, without a friend to comfort, or a hand to help him, without the teſtimony of a good conſcience, or a chearing ray of hope from Heaven? Weeping may endure "for a night: but "joy cometh in the morning." The night may be long, and dark, and wearifome: but the morning will be more welcome; and the tears that were ſhed will increaſe the joy, like that of "clear "ſhining after rain," or the ſweetneſs of a peaceful ſky, when the

tempeſt is over and gone. Relief from pain or poverty, from ſickneſs or deſpondence, bleſſed God, how tranſporting! When doth gratitude glow with a ſtronger flame, or praiſe aſcend to thy throne with higher ecſtacy, than in the moment of unexpected deliverance?

XII.

Yet why ſhould deliverance not be expected, if it ſhall be thy pleaſure to ſend it, and at the moment which thou haſt fixed? Or why ſhould it be ſooner deſired? Art not thou the unerring Diſpoſer?

Is

Is it not "written in the volume "of thy Book," that "light is "ſown for the righteous, and "gladneſs for the upright in "heart; and that in due time "they ſhall reap, if they faint "not? The mountains may de- "part, and the hills be removed: "but thou will not ſuffer thy "faithfulneſs to fail; nor a word "that thou haſt ſpoken for the "conſolation of thy people, to "paſs away till all be fulfilled." Everlaſting Father, let not me faint when I am corrected of thee: let not me make haſte, how long ſoever relief may be delayed, or

ſucceſs withheld: but perſevering in my duty, and the uſe of thoſe means which thou haſt appointed, may I wait with patience the evolutions of thy Providence, and the accompliſhment of thy Promiſes in their Seaſon!

XIII.

That "every thing is beautiful in "its ſeaſon," thou haſt taught me by Scripture, and I perceive from obſervation. The variety of Nature, and the viciſſitudes of life, the ſucceſſion of day and night, of ſeed-time and harveſt, of labour and repoſe, of youth and age, health

health and diſeaſe, trouble and gladneſs, I regard as the benevolent diſpoſition of infinite wiſdom. Such, thou knoweſt, is the frame of the human mind, that a conſtant uniformity of ſtate would ſink it into languor, dull the operations of reaſon, and deaden the ſpirit of action. Such, thou knoweſt, is our weakneſs, that even thy greateſt bleſſings might often ceaſe to delight or improve us, if poſſeſſed without interruption. How ſeldom, alas, is their value duly eſtimated, until thou haſt taken them away! Such, withall, is thy gracious conſtitution of things,

that thoſe ſcenes of Creation which pleaſe us the leaſt, are productive of good; and from every condition, even the moſt diſtreſsful through which we are called to paſs, we may by prudence and piety ſtill derive advantage.

XIV.

In the verdure, flowers, and freſhneſs of the ſpring, in the warmth and ſplendor of the ſummer, in the joy and exuberance of autumn, "how great is thy "goodneſs, how great is thy "beauty," thou God of the Seaſons!

ſons! How awful thy majeſty in the ſtorms of winter! I view with apprehenſion its black impending clouds. "Who can ſtand before its cold?" I fly from its gloomy rigours to the ſheltering roof, the chearful hearth, and the enlivening companion. In the mean time the rigours and ſtorms of winter are by thy direction, almighty Father, preparing the way for the pleaſures that ſucceed. The wearied powers of vegetation are reſted, in order to reſume their wonted vigour. The burdened air is unloaded of its vapours. "Thou giveſt ſnow "like wool: thou ſcattereſt the "hoar froſt like aſhes: thou caſt-

"eſt

" eſt forth thy ice like morſels," to nouriſh and chaſten the earth. They fufil thy commiſſion. " Thou " ſendeſt out thy word, and melteſt " them: thou cauſeſt thy wind " to blow," and they vaniſh, but leave behind them an ample ſupply of vital ſpirit and vivifying moiſture. The face of Nature is renewed: " thou bleſſeſt the ſpring- " ing of the ground: thou cauſeſt " the graſs to grow for the cattle, " and herb for the uſe of man." The woods ſing: " the little hills " rejoice on every ſide." All is mirth, and melody, and bloom, and fragrance, and animating ſoul.

The

The eye of Contemplation kindles into rapture, and the heart of the huſbandman is elevated with hope. The light and warmth of ſummer, its ſoftening ſhowers and balmy influence, conſpire to feed and ripen the fruits of the earth. " Then " cometh the harveſt" in all its plenty, and " thou crowneſt the " year with thy goodneſs." Thus all things move as thou art wiſely pleaſed to order, for the benefit of thy family; and even the moſt angry and threatening elements are transformed by thy power into inſtruments of happineſs.

XV.

XV.

Here, O Lord, I ſee an emblem of thy moral government. "No "chaſtening for the preſent ſeem-"eth to be joyous, but grievous: "nevertheleſs afterward it yieldeth "the peaceable fruit of righteouſ-"neſs" unto them whom thou haſt taught to improve it. Thy ſervants in all ages have acknowledged that "it was good for them "they were afflicted." Then they "learned thy righteous judge-"ments:" then they ſaw their folly, and confeſſed it: then they felt the vanity of worldly wiſhes and enjoy-

enjoyments, the weight and importance of eternal things. Their reſolutions for thy ſervice were more ſtedfaſt, their petitions to thy throne more frequent and earneſt, their ſenſe of thy preſence more devout and awful. How dangerous, alas, is the ſunſhine of affluence! how enſnaring the muſic of flattery! how prone the mind of man to be diſſolved and corrupted by long-continued eaſe! Bleſſed calamities, that humble pride, that purify the paſſions, that curb each inordinate appetite! Bleſſed diſappointments, that meet the heart in its wanderings, and bring

bring it back to thee, the only centre of reſt! How happy, when the ſpirit of contrition, by piercing the ſoul with grief and fear on account of its tranſgreſſions, prepares it for the comfort of pardon, "the light of thy counte-"nance," and the ſongs of praiſe!

XVI.

As the feelings of joy diſpoſe me to "rejoice with them that "rejoice," ſo by the experience of ſadneſs I am prompted to "weep "with them that weep." And, merciful God, how precious is the tear

tear of ſacred ſympathy! how ſweet beyond the higheſt luxury that ſelfiſhneſs can taſte! But where were the charm of mourning for another's woe, if all were proſperous? And where were the exerciſe of mild forbearance, if all were wiſe; of unwearied goodneſs, if all were grateful; of patient zeal, but for "the contradiction of ſinners," and the obſtinacy of the erroneous, the prejudiced, the unbelieving? What place would be found for the triumphs of Chriſtian forgiveneſs, without the provocation of injury; of Chriſtian magnanimity, without the aſſaults of malice, or the under-

underminings of fraud, the falſe-hood of calumny, the rage of anger, or the inſults of pride?

XVII.

Thus "it became thee, O "Lord, by whom are all things, "and for whom are all things, "in bringing many ſons unto "glory, to make the Captain of our "Salvation perfect through ſuffer-"ings, from the contradiction of "ſinners againſt himſelf." Thus it was that he himſelf learned obedience and compaſſion. "Ha-"ving been in all things tempted "like

« like unto his brethren, he « knows how to pity and ſuccour « them that are tempted." But who can ſet forth all his praiſe? « He was fairer than the children « of men;" the brightneſs of « thy « glory, and the expreſs image" of thy eſſence, arrayed in the mild attractions of humanity. Holy, « harmleſs, undefiled, and ſeparate « from ſinners," he was yet their Phyſician and their Friend. The multitudes followed him with grateful aſtoniſhment. The Scribes and Phariſees who ſought their praiſe, beheld him with envy. Inflamed at laſt to madneſs, « they « took

" took counſel together, and kill-
" ed the Prince of Life." But he conquered when he fell. " By
" dying he overcame death, and
" him that hath the power of
" death," the Deſtroyer of mankind. By dying " he ſpoiled
" Principalities and Powers, and
" made a ſhow of them openly,
" triumphing over them on his
" Croſs." By riſing again on the third day, " according to the
" Scriptures, he led captivity cap-
" tive, and received gifts for
" men; that thou the Lord
" mighteſt dwell with us" upon earth; and when the days of our mor-

mortality are ended, we might dwell with thee in the heavenly Paradiſe. So it pleaſed thee, righteous Father, that while the Kingdom of Darkneſs plotted againſt the Holy One and the Juſt," the Kingdom of Light ſhould prevail, and the " crafty be ta-" ken in their own ſnares."

XVIII.

Aſpiring to the throne of power, a hoſt of Angels tranſgreſſed and fell. Stung with diſappointment, and inſtigated by rage, their Leader ſeduced to diſobe-

dience thy creature Man. Thence aroſe the contagion of vice and ſorrow here below. "By one "man ſin entered into the world, "and death by ſin." Deplorable change from the purity and happineſs of the firſt creation! Adam was formed by thy hand in the perfection of beauty and innocence. He was placed by thy favour in a garden of delight. The new-born Earth ſmiled around him; its inferior inhabitants joyed in his gentle dominion; and he was bleſſed in an intimate converſe with thee: but, left to the freedom of his own will, without which his

his integrity could not be proved, nor his piety acceptable, he fell into the ſnare of the Devil, who pined at his felicity, and ſought to mar thy workmanſhip. Ingrateful but unſuſpecting man diſobeyed; and all was guilt, and diſſonance, and ſhame, and deſpair. The Tempter exulted in his victory. Thou ſaweſt the poor offender in his low and loſt eſtate, Thy bowels melted over him. Thou wouldeſt not ſuffer him "to "go down to the pit" without a ranſom. Thy arm interpoſed to raiſe him up, and cover with confuſion his and thy enemy. "The

" Seed of the Woman" was promiſed to " bruiſe the head of the " Serpent." And here, even here, Father of mercies and Friend of mankind, began the matchleſs ſcheme that was to fill the Univerſe with praiſe and wonder. Had the Parent of our race preſerved his allegiance, the glories of Redemption had not been diſplayed: the miracles of thy wiſdom and omnipotence, in producing the greateſt good from the greateſt evil, had never been ſeen: Eternity had wanted its richeſt ſource of joy and admiration. " Wick-" edneſs ſhall not ſtand in thy " ſight,

" ſight, and thou hateſt the workers " of iniquity." But the malice of Satan, and the ſins of Men, it is thy pleaſure and praiſe, who art the Maſter of all, to overrule for the higheſt advantage of thy faithful ſervants; even as it was, at the birth of time, to command order from confuſion, and the reſplendent light from primeval darkneſs. " Great and marvel- " lous are thy Works, Lord God " Almighty: juſt and true are " thy Ways, O thou King of ſaints. " Bleſſed be thy glorious Name " for ever and for ever." Amen.

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ADDRESS V.

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I.

CREATOR and Lord of all Worlds, I bend before thee with renewed veneration, and contemplate thy Attributes with increaſing delight. The more attentively I muſe on the order of thy Providence in particular, I am taught the more clearly to regard it as the gradual execution of a mighty Plan, formed from everlaſting in thy all-comprehenſive Mind; and my heart burns within

within me, while, as far as my limited faculties extend, I trace this complicated ſcene to thy ſovereign but unerring Will, who art the One Great Eternal. I rejoice in the perſuaſion, that thy greatneſs can feel no envy; that thy power can fear no impediment; that with thy juſtice "there is no reſpect of "perſons;" that to thy underſtanding the wiſeſt expedients lie continually open; and that thy goodneſs will for ever incline thee to employ them. Above all the reſt, I rejoice in the aſſurance, that thy faithfulneſs and mercy

are

are engaged to make thy dutiful ſubjects happy.

II.

Wherever, indeed, there is a capacity of happineſs, all the conceptions I am enabled to form of thy moſt benevolent Nature, convince me that thou art ready to impart it. I believe, that thou loveſt thy creatures better than they love themſelves. I know, that though ſin is an abomination in thy ſight, "thou deſireſt not "the death of the ſinner, but "rather wouldſt that he ſhould

"turn

" turn and live. A broken heart, " and a contrite ſpirit, O God, " thou wilt not deſpiſe." Thou art no " auſtere Maſter, reaping " where thou haſt not ſown, or " gathering where thou haſt not " ſtrowed. In every nation he " that feareth thee, and worketh " righteouſneſs" according to his ability, however ſlender, ſhall be accepted of thy boundleſs compaſſion in Chriſt Jeſus, " whom " thou haſt ſet forth as a Propi- " tiation for the ſins of the whole " World," of thoſe that have not heard of him, as well as thoſe that have. Who are they that dare to leſſen the extent of his Salvation, or cir-

circumſcribe the overflowings of thy benignity towards any that follow the light which thou haſt given? "God be merciful to me "a ſinner;" and let me never admit a thought of limiting that grace or favour in which I humbly beg to ſhare! Father of mankind, pitifully behold the wide and numerous regions, that are at this day overſpread with deluſion and ignorance, ſuperſtition, ſlavery, and idolatry. Oh, when ſhall "the Sun of Righteouſneſs ariſe "upon them with healing under "his wings?" In the mean time I reſt aſſured, that "to whomſo-"ever little hath been given, of

"them

" them little will be required;" and I hear with gladneſs the gracious declaration of him, who is " the Saviour of all men," that " many ſhall come from the eaſt, " and the weſt, and the ſouth, and " the north, and ſhall ſit down" " with the" Patriarchs and " Pro- " phets in thy Kingdom."

III.

By the faith of thine " exceeding " great and precious promiſes" to the human race, I am comforted amidſt the prevalence of impiety and corruption. While I cannot but bewail, that " iniquity " abounds"

" abounds" under thy righteous and benign Adminiſtration, I would not forget, that ſtill there remains, and will ever remain, " a ſeed to " ſerve thee upon earth;" I would not forget, that the number of thoſe who " have not bowed the " knee to Baal," is far greater than a haſty zeal, or a narrow mind, are willing to believe. While fools proclaim their folly, and profligates " glory in their ſhame," the upright and the wiſe leave their works to praiſe them; happy to cultivate in the vale of humility that divine life which " is hid " with Chriſt in thee," to cheriſh the

the worthieſt affections, and practiſe the nobleſt ſelf-denial, from principles the more pure and exalted, as they are unpretending and unſeen.

IV.

Whatever juſt diſpleaſure I may feel, when thy Majeſty, O Moſt High, is affronted by the prophane, and thy Laws are openly violated by daring tranſgreſſors; teach me to judge of the decent and the penitent, with that charity which I myſelf require, to pity their frailties as conſcious of my own, to ſhow them that mercy which

which I hope from thee. "Have "we not all one Father? Are "we not all members one of ano- "ther?" And haſt thou not diſtributed among thy numerous offspring the gifts of Nature, the bleſſings of Providence, and the graces of thy Holy Spirit, in ſuch proportions, and with ſuch mixtures, as at once to lay a foundation for mutual regard and dependence, and to demand the exerciſe of reciprocal candour and condeſcenſion? Where, alas, is the man who can ſay that he is perfect, or who, if in ſome reſpects more excellent than his neighbour,

doth not in others perceive himſelf inferior? If I, thy poor imperfect ſervant, am better than the worſt, or happier than the moſt wretched of thy creatures here below, "not "unto me, O Lord, not unto "me, but to thy name be the "glory." It is thou alone who haſt "made me to differ;" and I entertain with delight the aſſurance, that in thy judgement of mankind thou wilt conſider with equity and compaſſion the weakneſs of their reaſon, the ſtrength of their appetites, the manifold perplexities of their ſtate, the dangerous and difficult conflicts of mortality.

"Like

" Like as a father pitieth his chil-
" dren, ſo thou pitieſt them that
" fear thee: for thou knoweſt
" our frame; thou remembereſt
" we are duſt."

V.

I will never ceaſe extolling thee, the Beſt of Parents. " Thou " art good to all, and thy tender " mercies are over all thy works. " The eyes of all wait upon " thee; and thou giveſt them " their meat in due ſeaſon. Thou " feedeſt the young ravens when " they cry unto thee. Not a " ſparrow falls to the ground with-
" out thee, our heavenly Father.

"The very hairs of our head are "numbered." There is nothing too low for thy paternal regard, as there is nothing too high for thine infinite intelligence. From the elevation of thy throne, omniſcient Deity, thou beholdeſt, in one wide and impartial ſurvey, "all "nations that dwell on the face of "the whole earth." In thine eye there is nothing great but truth and goodneſs, and nothing mean but their contraries. Princes, Kings, and Potentates, however magnified by flatterers, or worſhipped by ſlaves, are of no account in thy ſovereign preſence, but as the in-

ſtruments

ſtruments of thy clemency, or of thy wrath. The diſcords of rulers and the tumults of the people, the convulſion of ſtates and the revolution of empires, cannot change "the purpoſes of thy heart," cannot diſtract thine infallible counſels, or for a moment interrupt thy divine tranquillity. Seated on the circle of the Heavens, for ever active, for ever calm, thou ſendeſt forth thine Orders through the boundleſs extent of created being; while "thouſands of thouſands, and ten "thouſand times ten thouſand" tranſcendent ſpirits, "miniſter be-"fore thee, hearkening to the voice

" of thy Word," and ardent as a flame of fire " to do thy Com-" mandments." Ah, that I could reſemble them in the fervour of their devotion, and the alacrity of their zeal!

VI.

When from the bleſſed community above I turn my view to the mournful ſtate of human affairs, I lament the ſelfiſhneſs and jealouſy, the cunning and malignity, the bitter envyings and evil ſpeakings, the fierce oppoſition of opinions, and endleſs violence of factions, which weaken and diſturb ſociety. Nevertheleſs it yields me conſola-

tion

tion to reflect, that all theſe are by thy over-ruling wiſdom tranſmuted into good. As, from ingredients of contrary qualities, the art of man extracts, by their mixture and fermentation, the moſt uſeful medicines; in like manner, from jarring intereſts and paſſions I have ſeen imprudence corrected, circumſpection enforced, and arrogance humbled; the obſtinate bent into ſubmiſſion, the ſlothful rouſed, the impetuous controuled, the licentious and unruly reduced to decency and order, the faculties of reaſon excited, ſuperior ability brought into action, and the paſ-

ſive

ſive virtues called forth into a more conſpicuous field of exerciſe.

VII.

There, O God, have thy righteous ſervants been crowned with victory, while their enemies were overwhelmed with diſappointment and anguiſh, in witneſſing their ſuperior excellence. When tyrants and perſecutors were permitted to embrue their hands in the blood of thy Saints, they thought, no doubt, to extinguiſh their names for ever from the earth, and finally to prevail againſt their Lord, and "thine "Anointed." But how were they

put

put to ſhame, by the heroic patience and invincible fidelity of thoſe pious ſufferers! The beholders were ſtruck with the power and ſplendor of the Chriſtian faith: "multitudes were added to the "Church:" Philoſophers admired the wiſdom of the Croſs; and Emperors paid obeiſance to the Man that was crucified.

VIII.

Omnipotent Jehovah, never hath thy right arm been more illuſtriouſly exalted, than when thou haſt "choſen the fooliſh things of "the world to confound the things "that

" that are wiſe, and the weak " things of the world to confound " the things that are mighty." So it was when thou ſaweſt fit to propagate the pure Religion of thy Son, by the feebleſt inſtruments, by Publicans and Fiſhermen, poor, illiterate, deſpiſed, unſupported by human aid, oppoſed by prejudices and errors long and widely prevalent, by intereſt and authority, wit and learning, in league to baffle their humble labours. Their humble labours ſucceeded: for thou waſt with them. They ſealed their teſtimony with their blood; and their expiring breath completed

their

their conqueſt.—What celebrations do I hear! what tranſporting harmonies! The glorious company of the Apoſtles praiſe thee; the noble army of Martyrs praiſe thee. Having "come out "of great tribulation, they are be-"fore thy Throne, and ſerve thee "day and night in thy Temple, "arrayed in white robes, with "crowns on their heads, and in "their hands palms of victory."

IX.

We, indeed, may not aſpire to their diſtinguiſhed honours. But "to him that overcometh," of what-

whatſoever rank, thou wilt aſſign a proportionate reward. Nor are we left alone in the warfare to which thou haſt called us. " Thine " eyes," almighty Father, run " to and fro upon the earth, " that thou mayeſt ſhow thyſelf " ſtrong in behalf of them whoſe " hearts are upright before thee." And wonderful on many occaſions have been the appearances of thy hand for their preſervation and welfare. Thou haſt often, for a ſeaſon, ſuffered them to groan under the oppreſſion of the adverſary. But in the hour of their utmoſt need, " when refuge failed them, and

" no

" no man cared for their ſouls," how conſpicuouſly hath thy Providence interpoſed, not for their reſcue alone, but for their advancement to a height which they knew not before!

X.

When, for the trial of thy ſervant Job, the Enemy of mankind was permitted to afflict him, he became a ſpectacle of ſudden and unexampled calamity. But we " have heard of his patience, and " ſeen" thy approbation, " in " bleſſing his latter end more than

" his

" his beginning."—How admirable, thou Diſpoſer of all, is the chain of events recorded in Scripture, by which the virtuous Joſeph was ſaved from periſhing, releaſed from a priſon, and raiſed to ſuch eminence as yielded him the ſuperlative ſatisfaction of not only cheriſhing an aged parent who tenderly loved him, but alſo protecting thoſe unnatural brethren who fought his ruin, loading them with his benefits, and " preſerving them " a poſterity on earth!" In imitation of thy goodneſs, " who " giveſt unto all liberally, and up- " braideſt none," how kindly did he

he comfort and re-aſſure them, when he ſaw their confuſion and penitence! "It was not you "who ſent me, but God, to ſave "your lives by a great deli-"verance."—Amidſt ſcenes of diſtreſs and anxiety, how often have thy worſhippers, like the deſpondent Jacob, been tempted to exclaim, in the bitterneſs of their ſouls, that "all theſe things "were againſt them," at the very inſtant that, by thy ſecret but powerful direction, they were "working together for their "good!"

XI.

XI.

Signal indeed have been the deliverances, and memorable the bleſſings, ariſing from caſualties by men undeſigned and unforeſeen, by thee alone appointed and arranged. When Moſes was born, and expoſed a helpleſs infant to evil accidents, we are told in thy Word, that "Pharoah's Daughter "took him up, and nouriſhed him "for her own ſon." All-ſeeing and ever-preſent though inviſible Power, it was thy Providence that led her to the river's brink at a moment ſo perilous to the lovely child,

child, whom thou hadſt deſtined to be the Saviour of thine ancient People. And was it not thy inſpiration, thou Author of beneficence, that put it in her heart to train him "in all the wiſdom of the Egyp-"tians," and whatever acquirements of prudence or ſkill might contribute to fit him for a Leader and Lawgiver to the Choſen race?—When "Jeſus, wearied with his "journey through Samaria, ſat on "Jacob's well, and ſaid unto a wo-"man who came to draw water, "Give me to drink;" from his requeſt, ſo natural in a ſituation which men would have termed Fortuitous,

but which thy Providence had ordained, aroſe a diſcourſe that led to the diſcovery of his divine commiſſion; and "many of the Sa-
"maritans believed on him for
"the ſaying of the woman who
"teſtified, He had told her all
"that ever ſhe did."

XII.

How welcome, O Lord, are unlooked-for mercies! With what pleaſure and thankfulneſs would I call to mind the extraordinary junctures, in which thou haſt ſnatched me from the moſt imminent danger, when no means of eſcape

eſcape appeared, and thoſe which it pleaſed thee to employ were ſuch as human ſagacity could neither have deviſed, nor conjectured! How oft have thy children ſeen reaſon to rejoice in events which they dreaded and deprecated; to praiſe thee for diſappointing their faireſt hopes, for denying their fondeſt wiſhes! Man, alas, "knoweth not what is good for him in "this life," till inſtructed by experience and diſciplined into wiſdom. "Neither is it in man that "walketh, to direct his own ſteps." Heavenly Father, let me ever follow thy leading, and ever ac-

quieſce in thy diſpoſals, with an implicit reliance on the hand which governs univerſal Nature, and which hath guided me thus far in ſafety, through ways unthought of, amidſt bleſſings unnumbered, againſt my fears, and far beyond my expectations.

XIII.

Blind to their weakneſs and their welfare are they, who lean to their own underſtanding, and will not confide in thine, O God; who murmur at the lot which thou haſt aſſigned them, and by ſtriving againſt the plans of thy omnipotence not only "diſquiet themſelves

"in

"in vain," but prevent the benefits they might receive, and haſten, multiply, and aggravate the evils which ſubmiſſion would ſhun. Had Abraham diſputed thine awful orders, what would his diſobedience have availed? How eaſy had it been for thee to take away, by ſome terrible ſtroke of thy hand, the beloved object whom thou waſt pleaſed to require from his! And where had been the exalted privileges conferred upon the Father of the faithful, the Pattern of believers, and "the Friend of God?" But knowing the afflictive command to proceed from thee, "he conſulted

" not with fleſh and blood;" he ſuppreſſed in ſilence the pleadings of parental tenderneſs, and prepared to execute the hardeſt taſk mortality had ever undertaken. How great was his recompence, and how happy the iſſue! The beloved object was ſpared in the inſtant of extremity, by an interpoſing Angel commiſſioned from thy Throne for the relief of the reverend Patriarch; and " becauſe " he had not withheld his Son, his " only Son, from thee, thou " ſwareſt by thyſelf, that in bleſſing " thou wouldſt bleſs him, and in " multiplying thou wouldſt mul-

" tiply

" tiply his ſeed as the ſtars of " Heaven, and as the ſand which " is upon the ſea-ſhore, and that " in his ſeed ſhould all the nations " of the earth be bleſſed."

XIV.

On all occaſions, O my Maker, endue me with the virtues of faith and obedience. And if, at any time, through the innocent averſion of Nature to ſuffering, I ſhould, like my Saviour, ſhrink from the bitter potion, and " pray that it " might paſs from me," I beſeech thee to ſtrengthen my weakneſs in that hour, and enable me, like my Saviour,

Saviour, to add, "Nevertheleſs "not my will, O Father, but thine "be done." This meek ſurrender of my deſires to thy determination, even when it touches the deepeſt feelings of the heart, be my chief ſtudy; nor let me ever reſt in any inferior attainment. Did he who "knew no ſin" ſubmit to inconceivable agonies for us men, and for our ſalvation; and ſhall we, who have offended times and ways without number, repine at "our light afflictions?" Did not he leave us "an example, that we "ſhould follow his ſteps?" Is it not right and fit that "we ſhould

"ſuffer

" ſuffer with Chriſt, if we would " alſo reign with him?" How wiſe and merciful is this thine appointment, O Almighty! Did we not ſuffer on earth, which of us, alas, would aſpire to reign above? Amidſt the allurements of proſperity, how ſoon do we forget the deſign of our being! How prone are we to doat on the fleeting trifles of time, and to neglect the glories of an eternal kingdom! Whenſoever I am tempted to loſe ſight of that higheſt intereſt, let the warning voice of thy Providence awaken me to purſue it; let me here endure any diſappointment,

or any pain, rather than forfeit everlaſting joys. When I arrive at the manſions of bliſs, how ſweet will be the reſt that remains for me there, after all the toil and trouble of the way! O my God, what a glorious exchange will Heaven be for this ſtate of trial! With what intenſe delight ſhall I look back from that calm abode, to the ſtorms I have ſuſtained; like the weather-beaten mariner returned to his native home, and happy in the boſom of tranquillity!

XV.

XV.

It hath pleaſed Thee, righteous Sovereign, to "ſet life and "death before us, the bleſſing "and the curſe;" leaving us as moral agents to our choice; but ſtill graciouſly reminding us of our danger, by the admonitions of reaſon, of conſcience, of thy holy Word; and by nameleſs motives of love and goodneſs inciting us to be wiſe for ourſelves. If yet, notwithſtanding, we chuſe the evil, and ruſh on miſery, is thy Providence to blame? If intemperance and incaution be followed with diſ-

eaſe;

eaſe; if "ſhame be the promotion of "fools;" if "poverty come like an "armed man upon the ſluggard," the prodigal, or him "who haſtens "to be rich" without diligence, and without diſcretion; is thy Providence to blame? If the virtuous are often involved in calamities which they have not drawn upon themſelves, but which neceſſarily reſult from the operation of laws connected with the general good, while they yield occaſions of higher improvement, and greater gain; is thy Providence to blame? But if by imprudence or anxiety, fretfulneſs and diſcontent, thy chil-

dren

dren will ſuperadd needleſs or imaginary to real and unavoidable diſtreſs, ſhall they charge thee with injuſtice or unkindneſs? If, encompaſſed with bleſſings innumerable, they ſometimes forget them all, and ſlight the happineſs within their reach, when a dangerous, a trivial or ſuperfluous gratification is denied them; ſhall they yet complain of their lot, and charge thee fooliſhly? O Moſt Merciful, how ſhall I ſufficiently celebrate "the riches "of thy goodneſs, forbearance, and "long-ſuffering?" Who among the ſons of men would endure, in the meaneſt of their brethren, ſuch perverſe

perverſe ingratitude? "But as "high as Heaven is above the "Earth, ſo high are thy thoughts "and thy ways above ours." Thou ſupporteſt the infirmities of our nature with a patience and condeſcenſion peculiar to thine: and when thou puniſheſt our offences, it is to correct, to reform, and to ſave. Bleſſed are they that "hear "the voice of the rod," and, weary of their ſins, turn to thee with meekneſs, embrace the hand that ſmites them, and adore the affection that lays it on. "For whom thou "loveſt thou chaſteneſt, and thou "ſcourgeſt every ſon whom thou "receiveſt."

XVI.

XVI.

In ſtudying the language of thy Diſpenſations, far be it from me, O Lord, raſhly to conſtrue them into Judgements. Am I not aſſured by him who is Truth itſelf, that "they on whom the Tower of Si-"loam fell, and they whoſe blood "was mingled with their ſacrifices, "were not ſinners more than "others?" Who, or what am I, to pronounce on the myſterious diſtributions of the Supreme, or adjuſt the balance of infinite rectitude? While with caution and awe I peruſe the various paſ-

ſages

ſages of thy Providence, as far as it is legible to men, open thou my underſtanding to diſcern its meaning, chiefly in what regards my perſonal duty and improvement; and incline my heart to receive by turns the correſpondent impreſſions of wonder and reverence, of thankfulneſs, truſt and joy, or godly ſorrow, and deep humility, which they ſeem fitted to produce. Nor let me ſuffer thoſe impreſſions to fade away, and leave me unfeeling or unfruitful, as though they had never been.

XVII.

XVII.

Reſpecting the meaſures of thy Government towards communities and kingdoms, thou haſt warranted me to form more certain concluſions than in the caſe of individuals. I perceive that they flouriſh or decline, as their works are good or evil; for here their exiſtence and their intereſts end together. In all that befell thy people Iſrael, "from the day when thou "broughteſt them out of the land "of Egypt, and out of the houſe "of bondage," thy juſtice no leſs than thy power was eminently diſ-

played. Were they not proſperous or afflicted, as they kept thy covenant or ſinned againſt thee; till at length, for their accumulated provocations, and incurable obſtinacy, after all the wondrous methods uſed to reclaim them, they were overwhelmed with horrible and unexampled deſtruction? And are not their unbelieving poſterity at this day ſcattered and deſpiſed among all nations; where they remain awful monuments of thy malediction againſt thoſe "who "ſlew the Prophets, crucified thy "holy child Jeſus," and imprecated vengeance on themſelves and

their

their children after them? But, O thou God of Abraham, when wilt thou convince and reſtore that unhappy race? When ſhall thy promiſes to the man "who be-"lieved unto righteouſneſs" be accompliſhed? Haſten the joyful period, "when, as there is but one "Shepherd, there ſhall be but "one ſheepfold," and peace, and innocence, and mutual love ſhall prevail, to the honour of the Chriſtian name, and the praiſe of thy goodneſs, univerſal Lord. In the mean while have mercy, oh have mercy on my Country. Deliver the people of this land from

luxury and profligacy, from hardneſs of heart, and contempt of thy word and commandments. Awaken them to a ſenſe of their danger, and a holy fear of for ever forfeiting thy protection. Recover them to that ſobriety, and thoſe principles, which formerly exalted them as a Nation; and ſuffer not Britain finally to ſink in anarchy, corruption, and ſlavery, after the great things which thou haſt done for her, which our fathers have told us, and which we ourſelves have ſeen.

XVIII.

XVIII.

That in all ages many of the wicked proſper, and many righteous men are afflicted, hath not ſeldom been "a ſtone of ſtumbling "and a rock of offence" to thy worſhippers. But when they "went into the Sanctuary of "God," when they conſulted the oracles of truth, and weighed the ſum of events, then were they convinced that thou haſt done all things well. They found that "the proſperity of fools," which ought to improve, ſerves only to enſnare and "deſtroy them." They underſtood that "it is hard for a

" rich man to enter into the king-
" dom of Heaven," though ſup-
plied with ample means for ſe-
curing it; that " the triumphing
" of the wicked is ſhort" and vain;
that " the pleaſures of ſin are" at
longeſt " but for a ſeaſon," unſa-
tisfactory in the poſſeſſion, and
bitter in the review. Of the ſenſual
and the inconſiderate they ſaw that
many " live not one half their
" days;" that at beſt their gratifi-
cations are wearifome, and their
time is a burthen. It was ma-
nifeſt, that in the midſt of laugh-
ter and flattery, affluence and
pomp, there is no home-felt peace

to

to the impenitent tranſgreſſor; and that when he dies, all his thoughts of greatneſs, and projects of delight, periſh with him. But, righteous Lord, who can repreſent the horrors of conſcious guilt, and the "fearful looking-for of "judgement and fiery indigna-"tion," from goodneſs abuſed, and patience exhauſted, which have on numberleſs occaſions diſtracted the hearts of thine adverſaries in this life? Tremendous anticipation, and irreſiſtible evidence of the miſery that awaits them in another! How different from the portion prepared for thy children

children hereafter! Nor is their lot here always calamitous, as too many of them have been tempted "to ſay in their haſte."

XIX.

Enable me, thou God of all grace and conſolation, to poſſeſs my ſoul in patience, and maintain habitually a chearful mind; that I may ever be diſpoſed to think well of thy Government; and, even when it appears leaſt auſpicious, to believe ſtill that divine benevolence prevails. Suffer me at no time to fall into that dejection of ſpirit, which ſees all things

gloomy

gloomy and alarming; as objects of terror are apprehended, and magnified in the dark. In the day-light of divine truth which thou art ſhedding on my ſoul, I perceive a preponderance of good, amidſt the unavoidable vanity and vexation mingled with the lot of man. I perceive that far the greater part are anxious to preſerve their preſent exiſtence, with all its concomitant evils, though they know that death will end them. I find none, who do not or may not, from their own induſtry, or the kindneſs of others, obtain the neceſſaries of life. I find but few

whoſe

whoſe real croſſes out-number their comforts. How very few, compaſſionate Father, are the hours of pain, or ſickneſs, or ſorrow, experienced by the generality, compared with thoſe of eaſe, and health, and pleaſure, which they enjoy! How eaſily are the wants of nature ſupplied, though the cravings of intemperance and ambition are inſatiable! How many, whoſe deſires are moderate, rejoice in the portion thou haſt allotted them, however ſlender; while the rich and the great regard them with pity or ſcorn, becauſe deſtitute of the advantages on which they va-

lue

lue themſelves, though frequently without either ſatisfaction or honour! When "thou, O "Lord, haſt put gladneſs in the "heart," like charity "it vaunteth "not itſelf." When moſt felt, it is then often leaſt ſeen. What unknown delight haſt thou cauſed to accompany the grateful and pious thoughts, the mild and generous affections, entertained by numbers in the ſhade of privacy, without oſtentation or noiſe! The bleſſings of air, of water, of daily bread, of balmy ſleep, thy indulgent Providence hath made ſo common, that they are little valued or obſerved

ſerved by the thoughtleſs and inattentive; while the reſtleſſneſs of diſeaſe, the languors of confinement, and the hardſhips of penury, which, through thy mercy to mankind, are leſs frequent, excite impatience and complaint. Great calamities and mighty diſaſters ſtrike and overwhelm the minds of men, chiefly by being unuſual; while the benefits hourly conveyed to them by thy bounty, flowing in a ſilent but copious ſtream, are often diſregarded or forgotten.

XX.

When for the juſt cauſes, and with the kind intents which I have diſ-

diſcovered, the cup of affliction is appointed to the righteous, ſtill it is tempered with mercy. When it is thy pleaſure to exerciſe them with poverty, they are not left without ſuccour or conſolation, in the charity of others, and the bleſſings pronounced on the virtuous poor, by him "who for our ſakes "became poor, and made himſelf "of no reputation," that we might learn humility, and be enriched with ſpiritual and eternal treaſures. In thine allotments to the good and the evil here below, I read an inſtructive comment on the doctrine and hiſtory of thy beloved

beloved Son. I clearly underſtand, that "a man's life conſiſteth "not in the abundance of the "things which he poſſeſſeth." Were riches and honours eſſential to the happineſs of the ſoul, aſſuredly he in whom thou waſt well pleaſed, had poſſeſſed them. But though "the people would have "made him a king," though the earth and the ſea would have ſpread their treaſures at his feet, he choſe rather, by voluntarily enduring contempt and poverty, to ſhow his followers, that theſe are not in themſelves tokens of thy diſapprobation; that they may befall the beſt

of

of men; and that temporal acquiſitions, and external reſpect, ſo eagerly courted, and ſo frequently obtained, by the fooliſh and the worthleſs, are of no eſtimation in thy ſight.

XXI.

I revere the memories of thoſe excellent ones, that have ſtood high in thy favour, whoſe favour is true glory, and are entitled to everlaſting remembrance and praiſe among men, for their fortitude under the preſſure of a ſtraitened and low condition, and for their integrity amidſt its ſnares. I venerate alſo the

the names of thoſe, who in the yet more dangerous trial of proſperity, have held faſt their righteouſneſs and their moderation, with a tender feeling for human woe. But at the ſame time I admire the wiſdom of thy Providence, thou never-erring Ruler, in rendering that middle ſtate of life the moſt common, which the frailty of our nature hath rendered the moſt ſafe and deſireable.

XXII.

May thy ſervant ſtill remember, that "Godlineſs with contentment "is great gain." Let others envy the

the opulent, the ſplendid, and him that "fareth ſumptuouſly every "day." May I enjoy with thankfulneſs, ſerenity, and a charitable mind, the competence which thou haſt mercifully provided! I ſhall then enjoy it with ſuperior delight. Even the ſmalleſt gift received as from thy hand, and accompanied with thy benediction, is exalted into happineſs. But, Father of all mercy, what ſprings of ſatisfaction haſt thou not opened for the refreſhment of thy children, in their pilgrimage to "a better "country, that is, an heavenly!" The ſweet ſympathies of virtuous

affection, and friendſhip unfeigned; the ſociety, counſels, and approbation of the pious and the wiſe; the peace of a good conſcience, and "the joy of the Holy Ghoſt;" the glorious fields of contemplation, which thou haſt furniſhed in thy works and ways; the ſoul-ſupporting, the ſoul-inſpiring promiſes of thy Word; the divine pleaſures of fellowſhip with thee, and the humble yet lively hope of life eternal, through Jeſus Chriſt; —my heart overflows with rapture, when I think on theſe things! "Verily there is a reward for the "righteous: verily there is a God

"that

"that judgeth in the earth." Surely thou wilt not ſuffer thoſe to periſh at laſt, whoſe preſent comfort and felicity thou haſt ſo indulgently conſulted. Thou wilt not diſappoint expectations of greater things beyond the grave, which thou thyſelf haſt raiſed, or put a final period to faculties formed for endleſs improvement and felicity.

XXIII.

Here indeed nothing is complete, becauſe nothing is concluded. Thou madeſt this world only in order to a nobler; and all things are moving onward in conſtant

progreſſion to eternity. "When "that which is perfect is come, "then that which is in part will "be done away." When the intentions of thy Providence are accompliſhed, its ſeeming irregularities will diſappear. By thine almighty appointment we are now paſſing through a ſtate of probation, to try our obedience, and purify our natures. Being yet but in the childhood of our exiſtence, we are under diſcipline. When we "have put away childiſh things," and attained to maturity, correction will ceaſe, and our advances in truth and holineſs be rewarded

rewarded with higher attainments. "Now we ſee through a glaſs "darkly, but then face to face." Nor peradventure will any of thy proceedings, thou ſovereign Director, inſpire the happy ſpirits, admitted to that viſion of peace, with more tranſporting pleaſure, or ſublimer praiſe, than the wonderful diſpenſations by which they were trained to happineſs. Then will the chaſtening they endured in the time of their trial, be numbered among the cleareſt marks of thy fatherly love and care. The tranſient proſperity of ſinners, and ſufferings of

the upright, will no longer beget impatience or ſurpriſe. The myſteries of thine Adminiſtration will be all unravelled, and the iſſue of the whole found ultimately conformable to the declarations of thy Word, and the innate hopes and fears of mankind from the beginning.

XXIV.

The terrors of guilt, and the confidence of virtue, the ſolemn appeals to thine omniſcience, the prayers and interceſſions poured out to thee by men of all nations, tribes, and languages, every temple and altar erected to thy glory, every

every ſacrifice made to thy juſtice, every offering, vow, and thankſgiving preſented to thy mercy; do they not proclaim, with "a voice "loud as the noiſe of many waters," the conviction of a ſupreme, all-righteous, powerful, intelligent, and gracious Ruler, originally impreſſed on the human ſoul, how often ſoever that conviction hath been obſcured by ſuperſtition, or weakened by error? When to the conceptions of Nature reſpecting this grand and joyful truth, I add the ſtrong confirmation, and the bright diſplay, it hath received from the Goſpel of thy Grace, my heart

heart is eſtabliſhed by faith: I riſe above myſelf; I ſoar towards Heaven; and, in the elevation of hope, I forget the calamities of the preſent: all is tranquillity and gladneſs!

XXV.

But unceaſing delight is not given to man upon earth. Incomprehenſible God, what ſcenes of ſorrow break in on my enraptured thoughts, and painfully remind me of the lot of mortality! What multitudes of beautiful, virtuous, and accompliſhed youth, the prop of their

their parents, the boaſt of their families, the riſing ornaments of their country, ſnatched away by the hand of death! What multitudes of helpleſs orphans and widows, left to mourn in ſolitude the irreparable loſs of their natural protectors! The meek and lowly groaning under the rod of the oppreſſor! The wiſeſt counſels, and moſt ſtrenuous efforts of the worthieſt men, often defeated by the machinations of the worſt! Vice and profaneneſs exulting over piety and innocence! Brothers drawing the ſword againſt brothers, and fathers and children againſt each other! Human beings ſtudy-

ing

ing the arts of mutual deſtruction, and glorying in the numbers they have ſlain! Kingdoms and empires laid waſte by the ravages of war! Souls innumerable hurried away to their everlaſting ſtate, at the command of blind and wanton ambition! Myriads conſumed by famine and peſtilence, deſtroyed by earthquakes, inundations, and burning mountains! Myriads pining in dungeons, and cruſhed by ſlavery, while their tyrants are clothed in purple, diſſolved in luxury, and worſhipped as Gods! Profeſſors and preachers of thy holy religion diſgracing it by moſt

moſt unholy lives! And alas, how many in former ages, ſaints and prophets, "of whom the world "was not worthy," ſlaughtered, and tortured by the inexorable rage of perſecution!

XXVI.

My ſoul ſickens at the contemplation of theſe things. Parent of the Univerſe, how ſhall I reconcile them to the belief of that Providence on whoſe wiſdom, power, and goodneſs, I have repoſed my truſt? "Haſt thou forgotten to "be gracious? Is thine arm "ſhortened, that it cannot ſave,"

or

or thine underſtanding perplexed by the multiplicity of affairs in thy great empire? Aſſuredly no. But this is not the conſummation of thy vaſt and mighty Government. The views of mortals are confined and weak: with Thee, the Eternal, "a thouſand years are as one day, "and one day is as a thouſand "years." The awful, the auſpicious period will arrive, when by Him, "whom thou haſt ordained to "judge the quick and the dead," thou wilt diſpel thoſe dark clouds, and fully vindicate the honour of thine attributes in the face of an applauding Creation. "And ſurely

"he

" he cometh quickly. Amen.
" Even ſo, come Lord Jeſus.
" Let the Heaven rejoice, and
" let the Earth be glad: let the
" Sea roar, and the fullneſs thereof:
" let the fields be joyful, and all
" that is therein: then the trees
" of the wood ſhall rejoice before
" the Lord: for he cometh, for
" he cometh to judge the Earth;
" he ſhall judge the World with
" righteouſneſs, and the people
" with his truth." Amen.

ADDRESS VI.

ON THE DEATH OF

Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

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I.

GREAT Author and Arbiter of life, I adore thee in all thy diſpenſations to mankind, whether they elevate the heart with joy, or depreſs it into ſadneſs; whether they enflame the ſoul with admiration of whatever appears moſt beautiful and benign in the order of thy Government, or chill it with a

painful ſenſe of the imperfection and vanity inſeparable from ſublunary things. "Shall not the "Judge of all the earth do right?" At thy call its inhabitants riſe into being. While their days are continued, they fulfill the deſigns of thy goodneſs, or of thy juſtice. When "thou ſayeſt, Return, ye "children of men," lo, they diſappear, and ſink into the darkneſs of the grave! It is thine appointment, thou Firſt of Beings; and "none can ſtay thy hand, or "ſay unto thee" with an efficacious voice, "What doeſt thou?"

II.

II.

From this awful decree there is no exemption. "The wiſe man "dieth even as the fool." Neither wit nor eloquence, neither rectitude nor piety, can ſave from "the "King of terrors." It hath pleaſed thee, Almighty Diſpoſer, to number with the ſilent dead a man of renown, a Maſter in Iſrael, who had "the tongue of the learned," and worſhipped thee with fervour "in the land of the living." His was "the pen of a ready writer." His was the happy power of com-

municating truth with clearneſs, and inculcating virtue with energy; of clothing the graveſt counſels in the attractive garb of entertainment, and adding dignity to the moſt obvious maxims of prudence. To him it was given to expoſe with juſt diſcrimination the follies of a frivolous age, and with honeſt zeal to reprobate its vices.

III.

This ſhining light raiſed up by thee, "the Father of lights," for the honour of thy Name, and the benefit of many, thou haſt lately ſeen

ſeen fit to remove. But bleſſed be thy Providence for continuing him ſo long. Bleſſed be thy Spirit that enriched him with thoſe eminent gifts, and enabled him to render them uſeful. In his preſence the infidel was awed, the profane ſtood corrected, and the mouth of the ſwearer was ſtopped. In his diſcourſe the majeſty of genius impreſſed the attentive and unprejudiced with a reverence for wiſdom; the virtuous and the pious were encouraged, by the approbation of ſuperior diſcernment; and truths, that had loſt the allurement of novelty, recovered their

influence from the native but peculiar force with which they were propoſed.

IV.

But "what is man, O Lord?" or who among the ſons of men can plead innocence before the Thrice Holy? When trouble and anguiſh came upon thy aged Servant, when "his ſleep went from "him," when in ſolemn recollection he "communed with his own "heart upon his bed," and examined himſelf in the view of his laſt and great account, he ſaw wherein

wherein he had offended. Then it was, that I heard him condemn, with holy ſelf-abaſement, the pride of underſtanding by which he had often treſpaſſed againſt the laws of courteous demeanour, and forgotten the fallible condition of his nature. Then it was, that I heard him with ingenuous freedom commend the virtues of forbearance and moderation in matters of belief, as more conformable to reaſon, and to the Goſpel of thy Son, than he had long conceived. How deep was the contrition which then penetrated his ſoul, in the remembrance of his ſins, and cauſed him

to

to feel more ſtrongly, what indeed he had ever acknowledged, that no extent of intellect, and no eminence of fame, can arm an awakened and reflecting mind againſt the fear of thy diſpleaſure! Let it be known that this man, after conſidering the uncertainty of life, after ſtudying the ſanctity of thy Law, after diſcovering more clearly the utter inſufficiency of human attainments, and contemplating with ardent ſollicitude the ſtupendous and unſpeakable importance of ſalvation, did with all the humility of faith caſt himſelf on thine infinite mercy through Jeſus Chriſt.

Chriſt. But for the confirmation of the true believer, and to overthrow the deluſive pretences and vain expectations of hypocriſy, let it be known alſo, that while he reſted only on this foundation, he was unalterably aſſured it would ſupport none but the penitent and upright, the devout and benevolent.

V.

Whatever eſteem or gratitude he deſerved from his countrymen, for his diligence and ſkill in furthering the knowledge of their native tongue,

in

in which they may ſtudy the Revelation of thy Will, and find withal ſo many treaſures of uſeful truth and ſolid learning; little, alas! would that, or his other labours and abilities, have availed him in the dread concluding hour, if in his life-time he had abuſed them to thy diſhonour, or neglected to ſecure thine acceptance by what is better than all knowledge, ſagacity, or eloquence; by veneration for Thee, and charity to mankind.

VI.

VI.

Father of Spirits, if men without principle or feeling ſhould exult, and ſay that his anxiety in the proſpect of his latter end aroſe from the weakneſs and depreſſion of diſeaſe; I record it to the honour of thy ſervice, that never were his faculties more vigorous or animated, never were his views more raiſed, or his words more emphatical, than in thoſe moments when the conſideration of thine immaculate purity, and of the all-deciding trial, had full poſſeſſion of his ſoul. Nor didſt thou leave him to hopeleſs

deſpondence.

deſpondence. He knew in whom he truſted; and thou gaveſt him to enjoy the recollection of having long cheriſhed an habitual reverence for thy Divine Majeſty, and improved the talents he received at thy hand for the intereſts of truth, and the enforcement of duty, "in the midſt of an evil and "crooked generation." To thy goodneſs, O God, did he thankfully aſcribe it, that he had never ſought the praiſe of the rich by flattery, or of the licentious by imitating their manners, and proſtituting his faculties to embolden vice, or varniſh profaneneſs.

VII.

VII.

But if this man boaſted not that he was righteous, if he relied not on any virtue which he had practiſed, if he earneſtly ſupplicated forgiveneſs through the merits of his Saviour alone, and left behind him in his lateſt Deed an open teſtimony of his repentance and his faith; where ſhall the ungodly and the preſumptuous appear? Will they lift up their heads with joy in the day of Judgement? Will they challenge a reward at thy juſt Tribunal? Merciful Creator, deliver them from their pride and impeni-

impenitence. Show them the greatneſs of their error, and lead them from themſelves to the Redeemer of the World for the remiſſion of their ſins.

VIII.

Let not ſuch as were ſtrangers to the piety and benevolence of thy departed Servant, cenſure too ſeverely the partial or prejudiced opinions that ſometimes contracted and unhappily obſcured a mind otherwiſe comprehenſive and enlightened. Teach them, O Lord, more charitable allowance for miſtakes haſtily imbibed in the days

of

of youth, and afterwards from the power of early prepoſſeſſion, without conſciouſneſs of evil, fondly retained and vehemently defended. It may be that in Him they were permitted by thy unerring Providence, to manifeſt more clearly the frailty of the wiſeſt men, and to raiſe our minds from the defective patterns of excellence here below, to thyſelf, the only ſtandard of Perfection.

IX.

Whatever gifts adorned him were alone to be regarded as emanations from thee, "from whom

"cometh

"cometh down every good gift," every rational endowment, and exalted conception. But, O thou great Sun of ſouls, can I believe, that thoſe emanations are extinguiſhed in the duſt? Can I believe, that He whoſe writings I have peruſed with delight and improvement, is himſelf periſhed in the gulf of annihilation? Abhorred be the impious and unnatural thought! When his mortal part, worn with watching and ſtudy, broken by ſuffering and age, yielded at laſt to the ſtroke that conquers the young, the proſperous, and the ſtrong; with what extacy

extacy would his never-dying ſpirit fly away, and kindle and flame as it approached nearer to thee, the Fountain of light and intellectual being! With what friendly tranſports would the illuminated and holy inhabitants of Heaven receive to their ſublime ſociety, a mind like his, purified from every blemiſh, and beaming with the radiance of wiſdom!—I weep for joy to think, that good men have from the beginning ſurvived the ruins of corporeal Nature; that they will continue to exiſt when ages are loſt in Eternity; that they will live for ever bleſſed in thy

preſence, for ever dignified with thy friendſhip, O thou King eternal!

X.

Rapt by the exalting contemplation, I rejoice more particularly in the permanent effulgence of thoſe ſplendid Luminaries that have ſhone in long ſucceſſion upon earth, darting the rays of knowledge and of virtue through different periods. I rejoice at the recollection, that thoſe rays have not been quenched in the ſhades of death; and that by thy good Providence we enjoy at this day the accumulated inſtruction of generations. Look with pity on the ignorant and the ſloth-

ful;

ful; who, having ſuch "a price "put into their hands, have not "a heart to make uſe of it." Rouſe them, I beſeech thee, to a ſenſe of their folly; and give them grace to redeem their paſt neglect, by their future diligence.

XI.

I praiſe thee, the God of thy late Servant, that "being dead "he yet ſpeaketh," in thoſe laſting Productions which abound with the pureſt morality; where the concluſions of experience are added to the reſearches of learning, and to the fruits of meditation; where the ſecret receſſes of the heart are

explored, imagination is rendered miniſterial to reaſon, and the reluctant paſſions compelled to acknowledge the claims of Religion; where the conſcious reader is turned inward upon himſelf, and bluſhes at the ſight of his imbecillity and guilt laid open before him with reſiſtleſs evidence. Grant, O Lord, that we may profit by thoſe ſevere but ſalutary inſtructions, and in the ſpirit of meekneſs learn from ſo able a Teacher "the things that belong to our "peace." Let not the graver dictates of his pen be loſt in levity or forgetfulneſs. Nor yet let us reſt content with the tranſitory and

inef-

ineffectual admiration of truth, when we behold it embelliſhed by his vivid wit and glowing fancy; but may we follow its guidance with faithfulneſs and pleaſure!

XII.

If neither the elevated powers of mind in Him whom thou haſt taken, nor all the vigour of his outward man, could defend him from the humiliations of ſickneſs, or from the pains of death; ſhall I, that am ſubject to ſo many frailties, neglect to conſider my latter end? If He who, by reaſon of ſtrength, reached ſo far beyond the boundary of threeſcore years and ten,

was

was there appointed to finiſh his courſe*; ſhall not I haſten my preparation for the period, when this feeble frame, upheld alone by thy bleſſing on the interpoſition of phyſical ſkill and unwearied kindneſs, ſhall be diſſolved? Surely the time is not diſtant when medicine will be vain, and fraternal affection ſhall have done its laſt office. "There is no man who "can by any means redeem his "brother from the grave." Nor will Death be charmed away by all the pleadings of female tenderneſs.—But, "O Death, where is "thy

* The late Dr. Johnſon died in his ſeventy-fifth year.

"thy ſting? O Grave, where is "thy victory? Thanks be to "God, who hath given us the "victory through Jeſus Chriſt "our Lord." Enable me, almighty Maker, to hold the ſame triumphant language, when thou ſhalt call me to the final conflict. May I be daily armed for it by a good conſcience, and a Chriſtian faith. Save me from the terrors and the weakneſs of Superſtition! Let not my mind be entangled in unneceſſary ſcruples, or my ſpirits oppreſſed by the practice of auſterities which thou haſt not required. Let me neither fear the diſſolution of nature, nor impatiently deſire it;

but

but may I wait its approach with ſubmiſſion, ſerenity, and hope! And when thy humble ſuppliant hath meaſured the little ſpace that remains, grant him, O moſt Gracious, to rejoin his venerable Friend, among "the ſpirits of juſt men made "perfect," to unite in elevated fellowſhip near the throne of thy glory, and enjoy with mutual felicity the brightneſs of the beatific viſion for ever. Amen and amen.

MVSEVM BRITANNICVM THE BRITISH

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